



WHITMAN COLLEGE

DEPARTMENTAL AND PROGRAM SELF-STUDIES SUPPLEMENT
SELF-STUDY 2007

Departmental and Program Self-Studies Supplement

WHITMAN COLLEGE

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Preface

In the fall of 2005, Whitman College's Accreditation Steering Committee wrote to the Chairs and Directors of the College's academic departments and programs eliciting their support of the College's upcoming decennial reaffirmation of accreditation of the College by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. In that letter, and in subsequent materials sent to the Chairs and Directors, the Steering Committee detailed the need for each department and program to undertake a thorough and candid self-study, the sum of which would become an integral part of the College-wide accreditation effort.

In order to ensure uniformity in the self-studies and to focus the departments and programs on the important issue of assessment, the Accreditation Steering Committee provided a template for departments and programs to use in conducting their self-studies. Members of the Steering Committee met with individual departments and programs and assisted them as appropriate.

The department and program self-studies were submitted to the Steering Committee at the end of spring semester 2006. They were read and commented upon over the summer by the Steering Committee members, and revisions for clarity and focus were made in the fall semester 2006. Departments and programs had a final opportunity to revise their reports early in spring 2007.

The Steering Committee had originally planned to abbreviate the self-studies and include them in the body of the College's Accreditation Report. The Committee decided, however, that any abridgment of the individual self-study reports would fail to adequately capture the unique character of each of Whitman's academic departments and programs. As a result, it was decided to collect the self-studies together and present them as a Supplement to the College's Accreditation Report.

The self-studies have been reformatted and some minor editing has been done primarily to reflect the location and availability of appendices. No other changes have been made to the individual reports. The College and the Accreditation Steering Committee felt it was imperative that each department and program have the ability to present candid and honest appraisals of their programs.

General Studies

Individually Planned Majors

Accreditation Self-Study General Studies

Goals of the Program

The General Studies Program at Whitman College plays a central role in the overall academic program of the college. General Studies both assists and supports the other elements of the academic program in two fundamental ways, first by teaching students basic skills which they must employ in all subsequent work at the college, and second by exposing students to material which informs and enriches work in their chosen discipline. General education is thus key to fulfilling the mission of Whitman College. It hones students' abilities to analyze, interpret, criticize, communicate, and engage in a variety of disciplines, skills that will be developed in depth in whichever area of study each student chooses as a major. The General Studies program seeks above all to ensure that students engage in a variety of areas of intellectual inquiry and that they grapple with multiple perspectives on knowledge and ways to create and define it. The program consists of two facets, the General Studies courses, GenS 145-146 and GenS 245, and a set of requirements that students complete coursework in several areas of study which may be outside of their major concentration.

General Studies Courses

The centerpiece of the first facet of the General Studies program is first year common course, *Antiquity and Modernity* (GenS 145-146, commonly known as "Core"). All students, including transfer students with fewer than 58 acceptable credits, are required to take this course in their first year at Whitman College

The goals of *Antiquity and Modernity* are to develop skills in the crucial areas of writing, critical analysis, close reading, and listening and contributing to a discussion which makes forward progress on substantive issues. These skills prepare students not only to succeed in college but in their professional lives after college. To facilitate the acquisition of these skills, students work together in a year-long course which privileges extensive reading, in-class analytical discussion, and intensive writing. The content of the course introduces students to selected texts from the Western intellectual tradition, thus giving them a basis for understanding some key moments in Western culture and critically thinking about this tradition and ideas that have sprung from it or challenged it.

Critical and Alternative Voices (GenS 245), an optional continuation of the first year course, offers students a series of critical challenges to the Western intellectual tradition. It explores the ways in which Western culture shapes and defines social norms and looks closely at the historical and ideological roles played by "others." *Critical and Alternative Voices* is intended to complement, not attack, *Antiquity and Modernity*. Texts in the current reading list, particularly *Orientalism*, *The Conquest of America*, *Brown*, and *In an Antique Land* are written for readers steeped in Western civilization, but these texts force the reader to go one step further and to consider the politics and debates of what is and is not defined as Western civilization.

Distribution Requirements

Distribution Requirements, the second main facet of Whitman's general education program, develop breadth in our students. These distribution requirements mandate that students take courses in the humanities, social sciences, physical or natural sciences, in quantitative analysis, and in the fine arts. Distribution also requires students to explore "alternative voices," courses that introduce them to ideas, places, or people in some way expressing a culture or set of values other than that of the main stream of contemporary American society. Rather than concentrating only on their chosen discipline, students gain broad-based knowledge, exploring the ways other disciplines ask questions, classify information, and pursue forms of truth. All Whitman students truly complete a traditional Liberal Arts curriculum, one steeped but not mired in tradition and thus fostering an understanding both of the world from which they have come and of the world into which they will graduate.

Description of the Program

Since General Studies is not administered by any single department, there is a General Studies Committee to

oversee the program. This committee consists of one elected representative from each of the three Divisions of the College, one from the *Antiquity and Modernity* instructors, one from the *Critical and Alternative Voices* instructors, and two student representatives. For administrative purposes the General Studies Committee has the power to propose courses to the faculty of the college and to make judgments on which courses fulfill distribution requirements.

First-Year Core

Since 1993 Whitman has required *Antiquity and Modernity* of all first-year students and students transferring to the college with less than 58 credits. *Antiquity and Modernity* is a full-year course taught in small sections. In the early years of this course, section sizes were sometimes as large as 20, but regularized contributions of faculty teaching in the program have reduced that size to 16 in the current academic year. The small size of sections is advantageous for our goal of developing students' ability to participate in a discussion which advances the collective understanding of the texts in question.

No instructor at the college (nor at any other college) can be an expert in all of the texts taught in *Antiquity and Modernity*. The course draws its instructors from across the college but does not put its instructors in the position of the absolute factual authority in the classroom. It is the texts themselves which provide the only absolute authority in a section of *Antiquity and Modernity*. Many of the instructors, however, do have a disciplinary background appropriate to the materials of the course. For the fall semester of 2006, there were 27 sections of *Antiquity and Modernity* with 21 of those sections taught by instructors whose academic preparation is in History or Humanities.

Instructors are to guide students through the development of an understanding of the materials of the course, thus instructors restrain themselves from lecturing. When some background information is required for a sophisticated understanding of the text in question, instructors are able to provide that, but do so in a limited way, asking students to make arguments out of the available evidence rather than to rely upon an external authority.

To make possible this delicate dance of limited authority, Core instructors meet as a group for a week in August and a week in January to prepare the materials of the course. The group works through all of the texts of the course, with one or more instructors offering oral presentations and providing written materials to the other instructors. Thus a scholar of the Hebrew Bible might offer a presentation on that text to the group. During the year, instructors communicate through an e-mail listserv and through small group meetings, asking one another both factual and interpretive questions about the texts being treated. In addition, the program maintains a rich bank of teaching materials developed over the years for each of the texts and for the teaching of writing. It is the collective nature of the enterprise which allows the instructors to teach materials which may be far removed from their own areas of academic expertise.

The instructors of *Antiquity and Modernity* have established a set of guidelines for "Common Procedures in First-Year Core" (included with the syllabus and supporting materials in the Accreditation Exhibit Room), which ensures consistency of practice across the various sections. The most important of these says, "Writing assignments are to be set by each instructor, but there will be a minimum of four written assignments and fifteen pages of writing each semester, as well as a final evaluative exercise at the end of each semester." The teaching of writing is central to the program, so instructors have established this specific minimum requirement, which seeks to insure that students have several separate shorter writing assignments. Many instructors exceed this minimum, and all instructors work to provide rich feedback on student writing.

The curriculum of *Antiquity and Modernity* concentrates upon the western intellectual tradition (see syllabus included in the Accreditation Exhibit Room). The group of instructors has been conservative in accepting changes to the syllabus. The course read the *Iliad* for several years and the *Odyssey* for several more, but Homer has remained. Conservatism in the curriculum has been important to the program for two reasons.

First, the common experience of *Antiquity and Modernity* is amplified and enhanced when all students at the college have read the same set of texts in their first year. Second, considerable resources of time and energy must be expended for instructors to acquire competency with texts new to the course.

The turnover of the faculty at the college during the last ten years has been great, with many long-time instructors retiring and many new professors entering the program. The program relies upon the contributions of both tenure-track and adjunct instructors. Of the 27 sections taught in the fall of 2006 tenure-track or tenured instructors led 15. Some of the adjunct instructors have lengthy and respected service at the college. Of the 12 sections in that semester taught by adjunct instructors, seven were taught by instructors with more than three years of service at the college. On the recommendation of the General Studies Committee, the college has recently instituted a procedure for the evaluation of non-departmentally affiliated instructors in the General Studies program. In the last few years the college has begun to make some tenure-track appointments which include "General Studies" as an area of the instructor's responsibility.

Because the composition and interests of the faculty have changed during the 13 years of *Antiquity and Modernity* the General Studies Committee recently undertook a thorough assessment of the program which resulted in recommendations for a more ambitious modification to the syllabus than has been undertaken in the past. These can be found in the document "Recommendations for the General Studies Program" available in the Accreditation Exhibit Room.

Critical and Alternative Voices

In 1998 continued reflection on the content and success of *Antiquity and Modernity* had led some faculty members to find that *Antiquity and Modernity* did not fully cover the diversity of Western civilization. Time constraints made the inclusion of critical theory, reflections on canonicity, and discussion of difference impossible in *Antiquity and Modernity*. After an academic year of discussion (led by Keith Farrington, Deborah Winter, Tom Davis, and Jonathan Walters), the faculty approved the creation of General Studies 245, *Critical and Alternative Voices*, in June of 1999. In the fall of 2001, the faculty reviewed the course and voted to continue to offer it.

Although *Critical and Alternative Voices* is optional, interest in it continues to grow. This year there were five sections, all full or close to full. Students enroll in this course sometimes due to a positive experience in *Antiquity and Modernity*, and sometimes due to frustration with their first-year experience. As Whitman's course offerings continue to diversify, students are more and more interested in theoretical approaches to understanding what "the other" is and how "the other" is created. The course is rigorous (generally two six-page papers, weekly assignments, and a twenty-page research paper), but student satisfaction is high. Many students who take *Critical and Alternative Voices* believe it should be required, although arranging staffing would be quite difficult.

To conclude, the creation and subsequent success of GenS 245, *Critical and Alternative Voices*, is evidence of Whitman's willingness to self-assess its Core curriculum and to act on the conclusions of its own self-assessment.

Distribution

Whitman's system of distribution requirements has undergone a major change since the last accreditation. In 2001, the General Studies Committee instituted a thorough self-study of distribution requirements and the ways they sought to initiate students into the various disciplines. The program, although strong, had flaws. Most importantly, it was an overly-complex system based around individual disciplines rather than approaches to study. In addition, the old system allowed students to drop one of the areas of study, thus escaping a field of study and limiting, perhaps, their Liberal Arts curriculum.

Prior to 2002, students were required to take six credits of work in six of the following seven categories: Fine

Arts; History and Literature; Language, Writing and Rhetoric; Physical Sciences and Mathematics; Philosophy and Religion; Descriptive Science; Social Science. As last accreditation document reveals, many students chose to avoid the Physical Sciences and Mathematics area. There was a strong concern across the campus that we needed to make sure that all of our students were exposed to these modes of inquiry, which are so crucial for contemporary life.

The new program of distribution requirements revolves around modes of inquiry and of the creation of knowledge, rather than being discipline-based. Since Fall 2002, students have been required to take courses in all of the following areas: Social Sciences; Humanities; Fine Arts; Science (including laboratory science); Quantitative Analysis; Alternative Voices. The new system added the requirement for a laboratory science so that students will have the experience of doing science, rather than merely thinking about it. Along with key strengths in the Humanities, Fine Arts, and Social Sciences, these new distribution requirements in the Sciences ensure that Whitman students are exposed to all of the principle modes of inquiry of the modern academy.

Rather than emphasize categories of knowledge, the new system of distribution requirements asks students to develop an understanding of how knowledge is created in different areas of study.

General Studies Assessment

Whitman takes student achievement in *Antiquity and Modernity* very seriously. According to the policies for this course, a student who fails to complete a single assignment in a semester fails that semester and must re-take the course in order to graduate. This year, seven outstanding *Antiquity and Modernity* students presented papers in a special Core panel at the Undergraduate Conference, Whitman's forum for undergraduate research. The papers submitted from *Antiquity and Modernity* were pre-screened by students' instructors. Then, those proposals passed a careful juried evaluation by other Whitman professors. This evaluation process, every year, rejects proposals deemed unsuitable for inclusion in the Undergraduate Conference. We have been very proud of the evidence of student learning demonstrated publicly at the Whitman Undergraduate Conference.

Assessment of *Antiquity and Modernity* is annual. Each year changes to the curriculum are proposed by an elected committee of instructors. This Core Curriculum Committee solicits suggestions from the teaching faculty for changes to the syllabus each year. The committee of six then considers those suggestions and offers a proposed new syllabus for the following year. The group of instructors may choose to adopt the newly proposed syllabus or not. If the group does not adopt the new syllabus, the prior syllabus is retained. Over the years, the course has undergone various changes, but the basic framework of the curriculum has remained intact. The instructors of *Critical and Alternative Voices* similarly engage in an annual assessment of the curriculum of the course and institute changes as judged appropriate.

Because *Antiquity and Modernity* has been in existence for fourteen years, the General Studies Committee was charged by the Dean of Faculty to undertake a thorough assessment of the General Studies Program, with special attention given to *Antiquity and Modernity*. In the fall of 2005, the General Studies Committee asked students to complete a survey on *Antiquity and Modernity* and the optional third semester course, *Critical and Alternative Voices*. A separate survey was administered to members of the faculty asking for a similar evaluation and including questions on the administration of the program which would have been unsuitable for a student survey. The General Studies Committee then studied both surveys carefully during the 2005–2006 academic year as it developed a report on the General Studies program and a set of recommendations for how the program should develop. The importance of this major assessment would be diminished were we to abbreviate it to a few bullet points in this Self-Study document, so we ask that you review the included report, "Recommendations for the General Studies Program," available in the Accreditation Exhibit Room.

One aspect of the "Recommendations for the General Studies Program" bears directly upon the assessment of the program. In the past the Core Curriculum Committee has borne the principle responsibility for the annual

assessment of *Antiquity and Modernity*. The plenary group of instructors has been the sovereign body which then accepted or rejected the recommendations of the Core Curriculum Committee. Some frustrations have arisen because that sovereign body can often agree that some change is desirable but can not as easily agree upon what specific change ought to be enacted. In May of 2006, the Core instructors accepted the General Studies Committee's recommendation for the creation of a Core Curriculum Committee with the power to modify the curriculum of the course as it sees fit. This is a one-time committee whose membership was selected to represent the various interests of the Core instructors. Thus, a greater opportunity and onus for the assessment of the program and for suggestions for its modifications lies with the Core Curriculum Committee with Power of the 2006–2007 academic year.

Accreditation Self-Study
Individually Planned Majors

Description

Although not a part of any particular academic department or program, Individually Planned Majors allow students the opportunity to develop their own course of major study by crossing or combining two or more disciplines. With approximately 8 - 10 students graduating each year with an Individually Planned Major, the major is a popular option for Whitman students that must, and should, adhere to the same procedures and standards as majors in academic departments and programs.

Students interested in establishing an Individually Planned Major must first form a major committee to supervise the construction of the major. At least three faculty must be selected, and at least two of them must be tenured or tenure-track. Although any of the three may chair the major committee, the student needs assurance from the chair of the committee that he or she will be present throughout the student's course of study. In addition, the chair of the committee must write to the Board of Review in support of the student's proposal.

Students proposing an Individually Planned Major must submit a proposal that includes a title and a rationale to the College's Board of Review for approval. The rationale must explain the uniqueness of the project, and differentiate it from a double major or a major and a minor. The student must also justify the proposed major in terms of its academic merit in the context of liberal arts, and must explain the intellectual coherence and appropriateness of each course to be taken to fulfill the major. Proposals approved by the Board of Review must subsequently be reviewed by the Academic Council.

In order to maintain academic rigor, the guidelines for an Individually Planned Majors require:

- A minimum of 32 credit hours
- A full range of courses from the introductory to the advanced level with a minimum of 12 credits in 300 and 400 level courses
- A course of study that is interdisciplinary
- A fully justified capstone course consisting of at least four credits of integrative work
- At least 12 hours in the program not yet completed at the time of application
- No more than 2/3 of the courses come from any one department or program
- No more than one-third of the courses be taken off campus and no more than one-third of the courses be independent studies
- A minimum of a 2.0 in the courses listed for the major

As with all majors, students with Individually Planned Majors must complete an appropriate and rigorous comprehensive Senior Assessment in Major. (See Standard 2 in the Accreditation Self-Study for details on Senior Assessment in Major.) Students may receive honors in their major if they fulfill the same requirements as other majors, such as grade averages and other disciplinary requirements.

Analysis

Although Individually Planned Majors are as diverse as the interests of Whitman students, trends do appear. Regular majors such as Classics, Religion, Race and Ethnic Studies and Gender Studies had their genesis as Individually Planned Majors. To some extent, Individually Planned Majors allow students some influence, albeit over the long run, in the curricular directions taken by the College.

Individually Planned Majors place a good deal of advising responsibility on the chair of the major committee. It is the chair's responsibility to ensure that the student is, in fact, participating in a rigorous and coherent course of study. Such responsibility is also time-consuming for the chair.

Individually Planned Majors are relatively popular. In a ranking of the number of majors per department or program, Individually Planned Majors would rank about 14th . The following is a chart of the Individually Planned Majors completed in the past 5 years:

Psychology-Environmental Studies	Global Development
American Race & Ethnic Studies	American Studies
Peace and Conflict Studies	Political Economy
Bioethics	Continental European Cultural Studies
Neural Networking & Modeling	Political Sociology
Biology-Psychology	Gender Studies
Political Philosophy	Gender Studies
Environmental Studies-Writing	Writing-Environmental Studies
Latin American Studies	Environmental Studies -Philosophy
Religion and Gender	Political Philosophy
Environmental Philosophy	Biopsychology
African-American Studies	Gender Studies
International Health	Biological Psychology
Environmental Studies-Writing	Literature
Politics, Philosophy & Economics	Philosophy and Creative Writing
Race and Class Studies	Environmental Studies-Environmental Literature
Environmental Studies Literature	Social Power in the U.S.
Peace and Conflict Studies	Post-Colonial Studies
Music Technology	Writing-Environmental Studies
Cognitive Science	

Projection

The College will continue to offer Individually Planned Majors as a way to respond to the interests of students who wish to study in particular areas not currently available as a major at the College. Although programs such as Race and Ethnic Studies and Gender Studies and a proposed global studies major will attract some students seeking diverse and interdisciplinary areas of study, who previously might have proposed an Individually Planned Major, the College believes the Individually Planned Major remains an important educational option for its students.

Division I
Social Sciences and Education

Anthropology
Economics
Education
History
Latin American Studies
Politics
Psychology
Race and Ethnic Studies
Sociology
Sports Studies, Recreations and Athletics

Accreditation Self-Study
Department of Anthropology

A. Goals of the Program

In the 1997 accreditation document, the Department of Anthropology quoted Clifford Geertz in its statement of objectives: “[W]e hawk the anomalous, peddle the strange. Merchants of astonishment.” While perhaps deliberately vague, the statement still holds some truth ten years later. The central goal of the Department continues to be to encourage students down a path of exploration, understanding, and appreciation of human diversity. Recognizing that current generations of students possess seemingly infinite opportunities for international travel and increasing participation in a global consumer culture (without ever leaving the US), the program strives to impress upon students the importance of culture in understanding all facets of the human experience, including responding to some of the world’s most vexing problems: ethnic conflict, environmental degradation, compromised global health, and poverty. In line with the College’s mission statement, Anthropology is fully committed to training students to “succeed in a changing technological, *multicultural* world” (emphasis added).

B. Description and History of the Anthropology Program

The Anthropology Program at Whitman began in 1972 with the appointment of a cultural anthropologist in the Department of Sociology. A second cultural anthropologist position was added in 1982. In 1986, with a third position for an archaeologist listed among the College’s imminent staffing priorities, it was decided to form a separate department and offer a free-standing major and minor. While the third position did not transpire, a number of adjuncts filled in with archaeology courses when one of the two cultural anthropologists was on sabbatical. In 1999, the Department was able to add a part-time (2/3) position in archaeology and, in 2005, this position was converted into a full-time tenure track line. While the Department has been able to grow its program and course offerings over the years with the addition of a full-time archaeologist, it has been restricted in this capacity by a commitment to the College’s “Core” program. Since 2003, the program has, at the request of the Dean of Faculty, maintained two Core positions whenever all faculty are not on sabbatical. To support Whitman’s generous sabbatical program, the Anthropology Department has pursued a policy of hiring from within. In other words, when one faculty member is on sabbatical, another faculty member is relieved of their Core commitment to teach the absent faculty member’s classes. In some cases, local adjunct instructors have taught additional courses to fulfill the demand for anthropology classes. This method has worked out successfully when our cultural anthropologists have been on sabbatical. When our more specialized archaeologist goes on sabbatical for the first time in academic year 2007-2008, it will be difficult to cover the range of courses usually taught by this faculty member.

While the discipline of anthropology is currently undergoing a splintering of sorts (as biological/physical/archaeological anthropologists divorce themselves from culturally-oriented departments of anthropology), the Whitman Department continues to see the value of training undergraduate students in what is known as a “four-field” approach. United under the concept of holism—that is a commitment to view the whole of the human condition (past, present, and future, biology, society, language and culture)—the program’s course offerings demonstrate an impressive breadth of study. Despite its small faculty, the program offers courses in cultural, linguistic, and physical/biological anthropology in addition to a variety of archaeology classes.

Anchoring the Anthropology program are two required introductory courses for both major and minors, offered sequentially each year. Paleoanthropology (101) provides a basic introduction to archaeology and physical anthropology. Introduction to Cultural Anthropology (102) provides a primer on how anthropologists use theory and ethnographic methods to understand the concept of culture. Less about studying various cultures, the course critically analyzes central aspects universal to culture such as kinship, exchange, ritual, language, and gender. The course serves as our basic introduction to get students to think critically about human diversity.

Throughout the program, students are also required to take a variety of “Peoples” courses. These 200-level

offerings (the number designates the *type* of course, not the level or rigor of the course) focus on different parts of the world reflecting the varied expertise of the faculty (for instance, China, Tibeto-Burman Highlands, the Near East, the Andes region, and Latin America). Most of these courses are general surveys of the pre-history, archaeology, and ethnological materials of different locations, yet some focus more specifically on thematic topics as is the case with Anthropology 219, Chinese Religion. During periods when all faculty are teaching, anthropology majors are required to take three “Peoples” courses from three different clusters (different regions taught by different faculty members.) In times with diminished faculty, students are required to only fulfill two courses from two clusters. (See challenges below.) Peoples courses are devised as “ethnological data” courses that are later paired with our required theory course to get students to work on the integration of ethnography and theory.

As standard practice and strongly encouraged by the program, students begin their junior year by taking Anthropology 318: History and Theory of Anthropology (Because of the larger numbers of students who participate in study abroad during their third year, this requirement sometimes has to be fulfilled in the senior year.) History and Theory exposes students to basic theoretical perspectives of anthropology that they can apply to a thesis project. The course is devised as a “bridge” course that integrates what students have learned in ethnological surveys (the 200-level “Peoples” course) with schools of anthropological theory, enduring debates and key themes of the discipline’s history.

Other less-specified “Bridge courses” are offered at the 300-level. These courses tend to be topical or thematic in nature. These include 305 Archaeological Method and Theory, 317 Language and Culture, 324 Myth and Religion in Traditional Societies, 327 Anthropology and History, 328 Medical Anthropology and 358 Sex and Gender in Anthropological Perspective. Other courses designated as special topics (347) also fall into this category. These have included a course on Food and Nutrition, Anthropological Perspectives on HIV/AIDS, a study of the Anthropology of Tourism, and Museums and Monuments.

The capstone project of the anthropology major is a year-long senior thesis, which allows students to pursue an anthropological topic of their own interest in depth over two semesters. In the fall semester – organized around a senior thesis seminar (490) – students begin conceptualizing, designing, and carrying out the basic research of their thesis. At the end of term, students turn in a detailed outline of their thesis with bibliographic references and portions of their chapters. In the spring, students register for 492 and work independently on their thesis projects and in consultation with their thesis advisor.

The majority of courses offered in the Anthropology Department follow a standard lecture and discussion format. As such, they tend to error on the side of passive learning. Students read, follow lectures, write papers and take exams on what they have studied. As is explained in greater detail in the “challenges” section, the Department seeks to expand the kind of teaching we do. We are realizing that students can learn as much from “doing” anthropology as they can from studying it in a classroom. As the College as a whole increases its support of student and student-faculty research, we see the value of coursework and other opportunities that give students the tools they need to carry out independent research. We should note, however, that this kind of training has long been a part of the department’s approach to teaching. For example, every member of the anthropology faculty has been awarded a Perry research Grant to conduct fieldwork with students. Students have assisted cultural anthropologists in rural China and highland Ecuador and on several occasions in archaeological digs in Jordan. The Department additionally offers independent study credits (1 to 4 credits) that theoretically could be used for student research. In fact, a proposal is on the books for two such opportunities: 1) a summer ethnographic field school in highland Ecuador where students would learn ethnographic methods and carry out small fieldwork projects over a 6-week period and 2) an applied anthropology practicum in conjunction with an HIV/AIDS support services agency in Walla Walla that is directed by a medical anthropologist. With respect to the second opportunity, students would volunteer for the agency and learn about applied research strategies for public health interventions.

What has been historically missing from the department, however, are regularly offered courses that teach students methods and research skills. Two courses on the books now are working to meet this goal: 312 Visual Anthropology (whereby students learn to produce their own ethnographic documentaries) and 337 Doing Ethnographic Fieldwork (an upper-level course teaching students how to carry out qualitative research).

Assessment of the Academic Program and Effectiveness

For students who take any single anthropology class, our best tools for assessment are tests, papers, and other kinds of classroom assignments. In our 100-level courses (which usually have enrollments of 40 students each), tests are the primary means of assessment. Because these courses are introductory and emphasize breadth over depth, tests are typically comprised of short identification of terms and integrative “blue book” essays that ask students to explain critical debates in anthropology, link various ethnological or archaeological cases together under a common theme, and the like. In upper division courses, and especially in the 200-level “Peoples” offerings, research papers play a much greater role. In these classes faculty stress 1) how to make anthropological arguments; 2) to organize and arrange secondary data; and 3) how to conduct bibliographic and other secondary material searches.

Our senior assessment in Major study is a year-long thesis project. The thesis process assesses students in three areas:

1. Participation in the senior seminar
2. Written Thesis
3. Oral defense of the thesis

In the senior seminar, students are assessed on their abilities to analyze and conceptualize a research topic. The seminar includes a few brief readings that are chosen specifically to help students identify a research question or questions, to understand how data is marshaled to make an argument, and assess the merits of a variety of different methodologies used in anthropology. The second half of the course is dedicated to the mechanics of the thesis process: developing a research topic and questions, preliminary bibliographic searches, and organizing a writing schedule. In addition to class participation, students are assessed on the basis of a written research proposal. Students are assigned a grade based on the rigor of their research question and their preliminary research efforts, as well as their ability to integrate materials, ideas, and themes explored in previous coursework into the proposed research project. In the fall semester, students must also assemble a committee of three faculty members who are in-residence (not on sabbatical). One faculty member serves as the thesis advisor and primary reader; the other two readers serve as secondary readers who read and comment on draft versions of the thesis. Students are required to circulate a thesis writing schedule (outlining due dates for drafts) and are expected to meet with each of their thesis committee members to discuss developing iterations of their work. So far, projects have consisted of secondary (“library-based”) research. It is the hope of the program that future students will do primary research based on their own ethnographic investigations. (See challenges below.)

During spring semester, Anthropology majors register for Anthropology 492 Thesis (or, in the case of Honors candidates, Anthropology 498, Honors Thesis). This two credit offering serves as an independent course (no in-class time) whereby students are actively engaged in writing their theses. Regular communication between thesis students and their thesis committee members – as well as between members of the thesis committee – helps to ensure that everyone is “one of the same page” in terms of the expectations of student work. In early April, students turn in their final thesis copy to their committee and wait for the scheduling of an oral defense.

The letter grade assigned to each thesis (determined collectively by the three-person senior thesis committee) reflects the overall intellectual sophistication of the project (including the rigor of the research question, data collection methods, and findings), the student’s ability to incorporate faculty criticism, feedback, suggestions from previous drafts, and, to a lesser degree, the student’s oral defense of the project. During the oral defense students are expected to engage their committee in an intellectual conversation about their work and to field questions concerning the project. In a test of their oral communication skills, students are assessed on their

abilities to address criticisms, respond to alternative interpretations of their data, to more fully articulate arguments made in the written thesis, and, more generally, to extrapolate from their project and place its core ideas and themes in a global and comparative context. During the defense, students may also be asked questions that require them to draw on their past coursework. Almost always, students must field a question or two that draws on their knowledge and understanding of anthropological theory studied in Anthropology 318. At the completion of the defense, students may pass, pass with distinction, or fail their oral defenses. Students who fail their oral defense may retake it after consultation with each member of their thesis committee.

Challenges and Questions

Integration of Data, Method, and Theory.

At present, the Anthropology Department is satisfied with the structure of its curriculum. Student majors and minors who take the introductory courses are, on the whole, prepared to succeed and advance their skills in our 200 and 300-level course offerings. By the time students reach their senior year, they have been exposed to a wide range of anthropological approaches, case studies, and central debates and questions of the discipline. Students are also well-equipped to carry out independent research for their theses. They know how to conduct high level bibliographic searches, are adept at using the various anthropology and social science databases in the library, and know mechanically how to organize and write an extensive research paper. However, there are gaps in their training. Where we find the greatest challenge in terms of student preparedness by the time they are to embark on the thesis project is their understanding of the ways data, method, and theory are integrated in anthropological inquiry.

Without theory and method, Anthropology is little more than a cataloging of cultural exoticisms; we are little more than the “merchants of astonishment” that Geertz discusses. While our students take a rigorous theory course before they embark on their thesis projects we find that they tend to have difficulties linking theoretical ideas with raw data. Last year, for instance, as we coached students through the proposal writing stage of the thesis, we were amazed when students asked the question, “How many theories do I need in my thesis?” From questions like this one, we ascertained that students were not making the critical linkages between our more ethnologically driven courses (mainly our “Peoples” courses) and those that placed a greater emphasis on theory (e.g., Language and Culture, Medical Anthropology, Anthropology and History). What we hope students will do in the early weeks of formulating their research topics is to ask this kind of question: “I am interested this X phenomenon. What theoretical approaches might help to explain it?” In other words, we aim to get students to see how theory –at the earliest stages of anthropological inquiry – profoundly shapes the questions scholars ask and guides the collection of data. Instead, what we have typically found is that students choose a topic, develop an atheoretical research question (really just a statement of topical interest) and then visit and re-visit theory as an afterthought. Opposed to what we see as an integrative approach, students do not engage theory at the moment of developing their research questions, but only after they have conducted a large chunk of their data collection.

We identify three reasons for this problem. First off, of course, there is a general aversion to theory. Even students who later come to realize that our History and Theory of Anthropology course is one of their favorite and most stimulating classes, typically have an initial disdain for theory. A more nuanced reason for the lack of integrative approach is a paucity of “bridge” courses in the anthropology curriculum that stress and reinforce the combining of data and theory (as well as method). The addition of more explicit theory-oriented courses may help in this regard. Anthropology 318, for instance, could easily be two courses, a “classical” theory course and a contemporary one. Another approach may be to revamp some of our 300-level courses to more overtly address the relationship between theory and data.

Lastly, and the area where we are being most proactive on this issue, is to better guide students in the production of their senior thesis research proposals. For the 2006-2007 academic year, we have made a major change in how we “teach” the thesis. Prior to this year, students began the fall semester of their senior year working with an individual thesis advisor to devise a topic, carry out preliminary bibliographic searches, write

a detailed thesis proposal and, in some advanced cases, draft a first chapter of the thesis. In review of student evaluations of the thesis process (In 2006, we instituted a senior evaluation of the department in the form of an anonymous narrative letter written to the faculty), we found that students had little understanding of how to actually devise a research question. While individual advisors could help students pick a general topic and formulate some basic research questions, it was found that students had trouble distinguishing between the level of sophistication of a research paper written for a class and a senior thesis. Part of the problem, we surmised, had to do with the fact that students were not catching on to the nuanced kinds of analysis we were looking for in the thesis—especially the integration of data and theory. To help alleviate this problem, we have flip-flopped our thesis courses. In previous years, students would work independently in the fall and then in spring register for a thesis writer’s workshop where the entire cohort of senior students would read and comment on each other’s thesis drafts. While the workshop provided a much needed fire under students to get their drafts completed, it did little to improve the quality of theses beyond concerns of writing and style. Because the workshop took place in the second semester, and students had only a couple of short months to complete their work, it was difficult to help students completely revamp projects that lacked clear and provocative research questions or that did not go beyond mere description. The addition of the senior seminar (Anthropology 491) seeks to provide a modeling of anthropological thinking and integration by a close analysis of a few carefully selected research studies that faculty and students dissect together.

Teaching and Facilitating Inductive Reasoning and Practice.

Looking at our curriculum as a whole, we realize we don’t do much in the way of teaching students what it is that anthropologists do. This is surprising given that fieldwork—both anthropological and archaeological—is a central, time-consuming, and formative aspect of all anthropology. Fieldwork is also the place where questions and answers relating theory and data are hammered out.

Until 2004, The Anthropology Department did not have a course dealing with anthropological methods. A course in Archaeological Method and Theory (Anthropology 305) has been on the books since 2000, yet its focus is more on explaining different applications rather than hands-on work. In 2004, Anthropology 337 Doing Ethnographic Fieldwork was offered for the first time on a special topics basis. The class was filled to capacity.

Because of a growing interest in doing anthropological research from the Visual Anthropology and methods courses, in the 2005-2006 academic year, three students wrote theses based on qualitative research collected in field settings. Two of these theses were based on qualitative fieldwork carried out under the auspices of semester-long study abroad programs. The other was a year long service-learning project in a juvenile justice center. While the department wishes to encourage more students to carry out independent ethnographic research, we see two obstacles that need to be addressed. First, students who return from study abroad and wish to use their “data” for their thesis face the fact that their projects were carried out without formal training in methods and without sufficient attention to ethical problems of their research. Often the scenario goes that students return to campus their senior year after spending a portion of the previous year abroad and ask to use their data to write a thesis. Many students who pursue this option give up in the early stages of devising their thesis topic. Often they find that the kinds of questions they wish to answer in their thesis cannot be fully explored with the limited material they have brought back with them. For those who do follow through with a thesis based on their study abroad experience, they often find that they must heavily supplement their material with secondary sources. As a general rule, the Department has strongly discouraged students from pursuing this option.

The other challenge is that, because of staffing implications, we cannot offer Anthropology 337 with any regularity. While many small anthropology programs at institutions similar to Whitman make methods a requirement, our small faculty and commitment to teach in the Core program make this an impossible goal at the moment. In 2006, 337 was taught as an extra course given to the Anthropology Department by the Dean because of high enrollment. It was team-taught by a tenure track faculty and an adjunct and was filled to capacity. The team-teaching model was highly successful (as evidenced by the high quality work carried out by

students and the positive feedback in student evaluations.) It is the hope of the department that this course can become a regular team-taught offering that eventually will be among its required courses. Requiring this course will, in the department's estimation, help to address the two challenges outlined above, namely to provide students with yet another "bridging" opportunity to see how theory and data are integrated at the level of methodology and to broaden and articulate the possibilities for thesis projects. This may also be a mechanism by which students who wish to use study abroad experiences to collect data for their theses would be allowed to do so if they had taken Anthropology 337 or the equivalent.

Ability to Participate in the Interdisciplinary Enterprise of the College.

Lastly, the department sees another challenge for itself in the area of contributing to the liberal arts, and increasingly interdisciplinary, mission of the College. As a three person department, and one that is at times saddled with a Core commitment, it is difficult to offer all the courses we need to order to maintain a coherent major and minor program. Beyond this fact, it is difficult for the anthropology faculty to be involved in substantial ways in other interdisciplinary programs that might call for faculty to teach courses outside of the department. Because of the teaching commitments to the major and minor program, it would be impossible for the Department to relieve a faculty member from their anthropology course teaching duties to, say, teach Introduction to Gender Studies or Introduction to Asian Studies. As other interdisciplinary programs emerge on campus and put their own courses on the books (e.g. Latin American Studies and Race and Ethnic Studies), Anthropology will be a tough position to fully participate in these campus initiatives. While this problem does not directly affect the Anthropology curriculum, it does affect the curriculum of other programs.

In conclusion, we see three programmatic steps the Department can make to continue meeting the goals of its major and minor program and to tackle the challenges just outlined. The first is to review our 300-level courses to find ways to make them more integrative of theory, method, and data. When possible, we can make modifications to our syllabi to help reflect this teaching goal. Secondly, we will continue to closely monitor our thesis process. We anticipate that the movement of the Senior Thesis Research Seminar to the fall will significantly strengthen the process by which students engage in developing their research questions and eventual proposal. However, more is necessary to ensure that the process improves. In fall, we will also be issuing a thesis handbook to each student which includes materials on how to formulate research questions, how to discern topics from research questions, bibliographic and database searching tips, and a detailed sample calendar letting students know where they should be in the process in any given month of the academic year. We will also be implementing a new evaluation tool for students to comment on what they have learned in the seminar. At present, the department collects little evaluative data from students regarding the thesis process. One professor has used the College's course evaluation form to obtain feedback from thesis students but has found the instrument inappropriate to capture information about one-on-one mentoring. In late August when the Department reconvenes for the new school year, an evaluation tool will be put together and administered to students at the end of both fall and spring semester to assess the thesis process.

Finally, the Anthropology Department sees as its most fundamental obstacle to be in the area of staffing. While every department can no doubt justify staff increases at some level, Anthropology sees this deficiency as critical to maintaining its core curriculum. Anthropology has only 3 full-time faculty members (and less than 3 when the commitment to Core has to be fulfilled). At the same time, it has seen student enrollments increase over the past 10 years. In 1997, there were only 6 graduating seniors. In the past few years, we have been averaging over 10. In the 2006-2007 academic year, there will be 14 graduating seniors.

A new faculty hire in Cultural Anthropology would help alleviate many of the challenges outlined above. At a very basic level, the department needs diversity. As the College subtly and not so subtly stresses the point that it takes diversity to teach diversity, we must admit (with a bit of embarrassment) that we are one of the last two all white male departments on campus. This fact is more astonishing given that, as a discipline, anthropology is a predominately a female profession (a fact mirrored in our own mostly female student demographic.) In short, we need some diversity.

Secondly, a new hire would help to meet our need for more “bridging” courses and to be able to offer with more regularity bridge courses already on the books. In particular, courses such as Language and Culture and Ethnographic Methods—bread and butter anthropology courses elsewhere that are also often major requirements—can at present only show up every other year at best. Also, as the waiting list for our Introduction to Cultural Anthropology class swells each year, we could easily offer two sections of this popular course.

We also need another position to help out with the thesis when one faculty member goes on sabbatical. Next year, for instance, we will have two faculty members on campus and will receive no extra help with thesis (e.g. adjuncts). Not wishing to ask faculty from other departments to serve on the anthropology thesis committees (in an overload capacity), we are temporarily suspending the three person rule and allowing students to only have two readers. This, no doubt, diminishes the quality of the thesis process. It will also be a hard thesis year since each committee will be comprised of an archaeologist and a cultural anthropologist, while typically over 90 percent of our students write theses dealing with cultural anthropology topics.

Lack of adequate staffing can and is being addressed with stop-gap measures such as temporarily alleviating faculty member’s teaching responsibilities in Core, hiring adjuncts, and making year-to-year modifications to the major requirements (e.g., allowing students to only take courses in two out of the possible three “peoples” course clusters and reducing the thesis committee from three to two faculty members). In the opinion of the department, these tactics will not serve the department well over the long haul as they confuse students, diminish the rigor of the major, and stymie the department’s ability to broaden the program (such as encouraging ethnographic research-based theses) and to increase enrollments. Because the Department finds these challenges to be issues of the major and not entirely related to work load, we approached the Dean of Faculty in March 2006 with a request for an external review of the Department and its major and minor programs. It is our hope that, in comparison with similar institutions, we can identify critical areas of improvement that the College will want to address in the coming years.

Accreditation Self-Study
Department of Economics

Introduction

This report is written for the accreditation of Whitman College in Fall 2006. It draws heavily on the department's "Mission Statement and Blue Print" submitted in July 2003 in preparation for an external review of the department and on the Fall 2003 report of the external review team.

1) Goals of the Department

The Economics Department of Whitman College supports the mission of the College by contributing toward the liberal education of our students. The discipline of economics has a particular value in a student's liberal education for many reasons. It fosters analytical thinking, a facility with quantitative methods, the ability to express ideas in written and oral presentation, and an appreciation of broad historical, social and political forces that affect human behavior. Further, economics offers a way of examining real world events that is helpful in preparing students to be effective global citizens. In short, economics introduces a way of thinking that can be used to form a deeper understanding of historical and current affairs. Thus, economics is a valuable part of a liberal arts education, and our mission is to provide students the opportunity to explore its insights. In light of this mission, our specific goals are:

- 1) to enable non-major students who take Introductory Economics to better understand the economic content of news media presentations of social and economic issues.
- 2) to provide students majoring in Economics and in Combined programs (Economics-Environmental Studies and Economics-Mathematics) exposure to macroeconomic and microeconomic theory, quantitative methods, and applications of this theory and methods in various field courses to enable students to develop analytical skills that help one "think like an economist" and to practice the oral and written expression of ideas. For students interested in pursuing further study in Economics, our objective is to supplement this with the preparation necessary for graduate work in the discipline.
- 3) to expand the interdisciplinary linkages with other departments and area studies at Whitman College. Ideally, this expansion should build on current joint ventures with Environmental Studies and Mathematics and should form new interdisciplinary linkages with Latin American Studies, Asian Studies, Politics, Sociology, Psychology and other departments and programs.

The department's perception of its role in the college has changed very little in the past five to ten years, although the department's Principles of Economics course and its course offerings have changed somewhat in an effort to better fulfill its role.

2) Description of the Department

The mission of the department suggests that the curriculum of the Economics Department should serve two distinct sets of students. First are those who want an introductory economics course and possibly a few more courses to meet the College distribution requirements and to complement their major studies (often in history, politics, mathematics or environmental studies-combined majors), perhaps earning an economics minor. The department's one-semester introductory courses (Econ 107, Principles of Economics of Economics and Econ 109, Principles of Economics & the Environment) offer students a one-course exposure to economic tools that may find useful in other courses. In addition, the department offers a few lower level courses (courses for which Econ 107 or 109 is the only pre-requisite) that may appeal to non-major students with particular interests. Game Theory, Government & the Economy, The Economics of Crime & Punishment, Global Environmental & Natural Resource Issues, and a brand new course, Global Collective Action, each appeal to a particular set of non-major students pursuing studies in Mathematics, Politics, History, Sociology and/or Environmental Studies, and some of these courses will be attractive to students in an International/Global Studies major, now in development at the College.

The department curriculum also serves those students who pursue an economics major or a combined major with an economics emphasis (such as mathematics-economics, environmental studies-economics, or economics-related Individually Planned Majors). These students take a core set of four courses that includes Principles of Economics, Intermediate Microeconomics, Intermediate Macroeconomics, and Statistics for Economists (or an equivalent course). In addition, economics majors select five (mostly) upper level courses that draw upon the material presented in the intermediate courses. Ideally, students majoring in economics will take a mix of courses that expose them to the theory and application of microeconomics and macroeconomics and to quantitative methods. Students pursuing a combined major in economics and another discipline take the four core economics courses and a somewhat smaller and more defined mix of elective courses in economics that complement their coursework in the other discipline (mathematics or environmental studies). All senior economics and economics-combined majors take a comprehensive examination which consists of two parts: a) The Major Field Test in Economics, which is a standardized test covering material in the introductory and intermediate level core courses and statistics; b) an oral examination of one hour with two examiners over extensions and (policy-related) applications of economic theory.

In addition to serving the college as classroom teachers of major and non-major students, the department seeks to form better connections with other college programs and the campus community. This goal has taken on renewed importance in the past few years as the department has come to see it as a means of bringing economics to the broader community. One significant effort in this regard is the participation of department members in interdisciplinary programs. One department member has served as a long-standing member of the Environmental Studies Committee and has added courses to serve Environmental Studies students (Principles of Economics & the Environment, Global Environmental & Resource Issues). Our new addition to the department (bringing our staff to a total of six faculty members) will bring expertise in international political economy, and she will play an important role in fashioning a new International/Global Studies major. In recent years the department's efforts to enhance the visibility of economics in the community have been aided by the introduction and funding of two new speaker series for the economics department, the Genevieve Patterson Perry Endowment for the Study of Economics and the William Allen-Boeing Lectureship and Student Investment Endowment. In addition, the department is a regular user of the College's Visiting Educator Fund and the new O'Donnell Visiting Educator Fund. These programs bring distinguished speakers to campus to present a public lecture, offer informal presentations in classes and meet with students. Department members are also engaged in several other activities that bring economics to the campus community and beyond. Economics faculty have addressed student groups and the general public on topics ranging from global climate change, transportation economics, physician-assisted suicide, and the Enron debacle. And this year, our newest colleague has launched a new professional journal, the *Journal of Wine Economics*, and he will help a student board launch the Whitman College Working Paper Series next year.

The department has seen little change in the staffing of our five-person department the past ten years until very recently with the retirement of Professor James F. Shepherd and the arrival of Associate Professor Karl Storchmann in Fall 2005. We eagerly await the arrival of an additional (sixth) tenure track person, Assistant Professor Raechelle Mascarenhas, in Fall 2006. (See Appendix A for a list and vitae of department members available in the Accreditation Exhibit Room.) The time trend of the department's senior majors (including Economics-Combined majors) exhibits very little change for most the past ten years, but a marked increase in the number of senior majors in the past two years from an average of 19.125 senior majors per year from 1997-2004 to 27 senior majors per year from 2004-2006. (See Appendix B in the Accreditation Exhibit Room.) It is important to note that the numbers of senior majors over the long term have been very erratic and the numbers for the past two years do not match the heyday of the late 1980s. Nonetheless this recent increase in the number of senior majors suggest the department may be experiencing real growth and this is confirmed by a look at enrollment figures over the past ten years. (See Appendix C available in the Accreditation Exhibit Room.) Thus, it appears that the department is experiencing the beginning of a growth trend, and we are certainly in the midst of an important transition for the department and excited about the department's new contributions to Whitman College.

The Department's plans for the immediate future are focused on improving our curriculum to better serve our two student groups, non-majors and majors, drawing on the recommendations of the Fall 2003 External Review Team report and on our own assessment of our program. Our primary concern has been the Principles of Economics course. Economics has much to offer all students seeking a liberal arts education. The course is not only the introduction to the major, it is also beneficial for students majoring in other social sciences and in interdisciplinary programs, such as Environmental Studies, Asian Studies, and (someday) International/Global Studies. But our relatively low enrollments in most of the past ten years suggested that the department has not been serving these non-major students well. The External Review Team agreed and urged the department to take action. In 2004-2005 the department members implemented a "less is more" streamlined approach to the Principles of Economics course and reduced the number of contact hours from four class meetings per week to three (for sections that meet in the morning) to match the contact hours of other introductory social science courses with whom the department competes for students. The result has been a dramatic increase in enrollments in the Principles courses in the past two years (see Appendix D available in the Accreditation Exhibit Room). However, the department is considering additional changes, most notably the introduction of a two-semester sequence (Principles of Microeconomics and Principles of Macroeconomics, each for three credits) that students could choose instead of the single-course Principles of Economics (or Principles of Economics and the Environment) for four credits.

Another important concern is the coverage of field courses we offer to both major and non-major students. In the recent past and for next year we have added and rearranged course loads to add new classes in Transportation Economics, Development Economics, Economics of Crime and Punishment, Global Collective Action, Global Environmental and Natural Resource Issues, Applied Macroeconomics, Economic Geography and Wine Economics. However, our constraints limit our ability to offer our majors courses in certain traditional key fields in Economics (History of Economic Thought, Industrial Organization and Economic History) and in important new fields (such as Health Economics). In addition, the department has traditionally offered students the opportunity to take an accounting course. The course does not count for economics credit, but it is a valuable course for both major and non-major students, and was taught by Walter Froese, the Controller of the College. However, he was not able to offer the course last year, nor will he offer it next year, and the department's efforts to find another (adjunct) instructor have failed. This situation needs to be remedied in the near future.

A third concern is to consider changes in the major requirements. Certainly, providing an option for students to take a two semester Principles of Economics sequence would require a change in the rest of the major requirements, if only to accommodate the 36 credit limit for the major. In addition, we are discussing several other modifications of major requirements, each of which has varying degrees of faculty support thus far:

- a) changes in the current statistics course, Econ 227, Statistics for Economists: Ensure that the course is offered by two different faculty members, as we do for other required courses, and shift the course coverage to include more on basic econometrics.
- b) changes in the Math 125, Calculus I, pre-requisite for the Intermediate Microeconomics and Macroeconomics theory courses: One department member suggests dropping this and replacing it with a department course covering quantitative methods, including calculus and basic statistics.
- c) requiring Econ 327, Econometrics. Presently, Econometrics is strongly urged for honors students, but some propose that it be required for these students as well as others.
- d) a research/writing requirement: We have also discussed the importance of ensuring that all Economics students gain some research and writing experience and we are pondering ways to do this. A senior project requirement is certainly one means to achieve this, but the paper and project requirements in some of our upper level courses provide many of the research and writing-related

learning benefits of a thesis or senior project. So we are considering requiring that students take at least one course from a list of research-and-writing-designated upper level courses.

Finally, we plan to seek additional resources, especially computer software and hardware, to improve our teaching effectiveness. For example, some classes make use of econometrics software such as E-Views, but glitches in accessing this program over the network make certain class presentations a risky venture. Another example is ArcGIS software for use in Econ 479, Economic Geography, and some faculty research problems. We are encouraged by the Technology Services Department's plan to make ArcGIS more available through the campus computer network and to offer classes for faculty to familiarize themselves with this tool.

3) Assessment of the Academic Program and Effectiveness

The assessment of the economics program and its effectiveness is provided by our students' performance on the comprehensive major examinations and by the Fall 2003 external review of the department. Additional indicators of the department's performance are provided by graduate school enrollment.

A) Comprehensive Major Examinations

The comprehensive major exams provide a means of assessing both students and the department program. Student in economics take the Major Field Test in Economics (MFT) (published by the Educational Testing Service) for the written portion of the exam. This is a standardized test that provides an objective assessment of students' understanding of the material and it permits us to compare our students' performance with students of other institutions (and hence, to compare our program with those of other institutions). The second component is an oral examination that may cover all course material and requires students to extend and apply economics theory. Thus, the oral examination complements the written examination.

In our view, the department offers a good course of study for our economics and economics-combined major students given our current constraints, and our students' scores on the MFT provides some evidence of this. As a department, our students in the past few years have consistently ranked in the 90th to 99th percentile and typically ranked in the 95th to 99th percentile of departments whose students participate in this test. (See Appendix E available in the Accreditation Exhibit Room.) However, although this certainly suggests our majors are well prepared in Economics, it should be noted that while the group of schools participating in the Economics MFT includes some comparable to Whitman, the group is quite varied.

B) The Fall 2003 External Review of the Economics Department

The department was faced with the retirement of Professor Jim Shepherd at the completion of the 2003-2004 academic year, and Dean of Faculty Patrick Keef initiated an external review of the department in anticipation of this transition. The department examined its program and wrote a report for the reviewers who then made their campus visit and submitted their report in Fall 2003. The process led to some immediate changes and discussion that will lead to further change in the future, much of which has been mentioned elsewhere in this report. Below is a list of the Review Team's recommendations (some of which are combined items from the Review Team's report) and the department's response:

- 1) The review team urged the department to hire a replacement for Jim Shepherd's position whose field could add to the department's breadth of course offerings. More specifically, the review team considered economic history (Jim Shepherd's primary field) and history of economic thought as luxuries in an economics curriculum, and encouraged the department to hire an applied microeconomist whose research and courses emphasize empirical analysis and policy applications. Further, the department was strongly encouraged to ensure that the new hire add teaching strength and experience to the Principles of Economics course and to the curriculum, in general. In addition, the review team suggested that an advanced-level hire might be appropriate for this position.

The department undertook a national search the following year and hired Karl Storchmann as an associate professor of economics, joining the faculty in 2005-2006. Professor Storchmann's teaching fields include Transportation Economics, Public Finance, Wine Economics, Intermediate Microeconomics, Principles of Economics, and Econometrics (in Spring 2007).

- 2) Change the Principles of Economics course. The department is urged to experiment with the two-semester sequence for this course, incorporate more policy-based applications, and reduce the number of class meetings per week from four to three. Topic-based first courses for non-majors were NOT encouraged.

The department currently continues to offer a one-semester Principles of Economics course, but it has been significantly streamlined with fewer topics and the addition of some applications, and the number of class meetings has been reduced. In addition, a new course, Econ 109, Principles of Economics & the Environment, was introduced (counter to the recommendation of the Review Team.) The enrollments have increased dramatically in the courses since changes were implemented in 2004-2005. But further change may be in store as the department considers the addition of a two-semester sequence.

- 3) A Senior Seminar should be considered. The Review Team found that the upper level courses do a good job of exposing students to paper writing and research, but since students are enthusiastic about a senior seminar and it fits the culture of Whitman, they suggest that the department consider this.

This is under discussion.

- 4) Strengthen the Statistics/Econometrics courses. The department should make sure these courses are offered by more than one instructor and/or the department should discuss what particular skills students should learn in the courses in preparation for subsequent courses.

Both Professors Parcels and Storchmann will teach Econ 327, Econometrics, next year in the fall and spring semesters, respectively. The department is currently discussing the content and staffing of Econ 227, Statistics for Economists.

- 5) Expand the department to six tenure track positions to strengthen the economics curriculum and to increase the department's contributions to interdisciplinary studies. The review team suggested strategies. One entailed advertising for two positions to attract economist couples in the 2004-2005 search instead of a single search for Jim Shepherd's replacement. Another strategy suggested was to add a sixth position as part of a sabbatical leave replacement.

The department is delighted that the Dean of Faculty's proposal for a sixth position in Economics in International Political Economy was approved by the Board of Trustees. The department opened a search this year and will bring Raechelle Mascarenhas to Whitman in Fall 2006. This year Professor Mascarenhas will teach courses in Development, International Economics, and Global Collective Action, in addition to Principles of Economics, and she will help form an International/Global Studies major.

- 6) The department should do what it can to maintain or expand the breadth of course offerings. This becomes more difficult if the department decides to offer a two-semester Principles of Economics sequence, but courses with very low enrollments should be taught less frequently, and in rotation with other courses.

The department will be discussing this situation further. However, it seems that the appropriate

remedy will probably vary from course to course. For example, in a particular year Econ 428 (Mathematical Economics) or Econ 477 (Environmental & Natural Resource Economics) will likely have enrollments of fewer than ten students (or even fewer than five), but these courses should continue to be offered each year because they are required for a particular major program. In other cases, the enrollment may be low because a new professor has not yet had an opportunity to become established (Econ 293, Global Collective Action). In some cases, the department faculty could make an effort to remind students that a good mix of macro, micro, and quantitative methods courses is desirable. In a department that is a bit heavy in its microeconomics emphasis, this would help boost enrollments in upper level courses such as Econ 408, Applied Macroeconomics and encourage students to take an appropriate mix of courses. Finally, in some cases it may be sensible to jiggle the course offerings so as to add new courses that will draw higher enrollments and reduce the frequency with which others are offered. A recent example of this is the addition of Econ 293, The Economics of Crime and Punishment, in which a healthy 16 students were enrolled when it was offered last fall for the first time. This will be an ongoing discussion topic in the department.

C) Graduate Study of Economics Majors

A final indicator of the Department's performance is the quality of preparation for those of our students interested in graduate study. We cannot directly assess our graduates' performance in post-secondary education programs, but we have a rough idea of the portion of Economics students who enter graduate programs after Whitman. These figures, reported in Appendix F and available in the Accreditation Exhibit Room, are taken from the Whitman College Alumni Office's database of graduates from the past 10 years. The database contains observations for 230 alumni majors of economics programs from the classes of 1995 to 2005, defined broadly to include graduates who majored in Economics, Economics-Environmental Studies, Economics-Mathematics, and Individually Planned Majors with heavy emphasis on Economics. Fifty-six, or 24% of these either completed a graduate program or are pursuing graduate study. The most common graduate program for economics majors is law (7% of economics majors) and business (nearly 5%). Many students may choose another field of study and pursue an Economics minor in preparation for graduate study, especially in law and business, and information for these students is also provided.

Conclusion

We are very hopeful about the future of the department, and we're looking forward to doing better what we have set out to do: providing a good introduction to economics and some accessible courses for non-majors that can expand these students' understanding of the world, offering an excellent course of study for our majors, and reaching out to the campus community. In this period of change at the College we have an opportunity to make new contributions, and we plan to grasp it.

Accreditation Self-Study
Department of Education

Goals of the Education Department

The goal of the Education Department is to provide students with the opportunities and resources to study and reflect upon the role of schools and schooling in a liberal democracy. The Education Department offers courses designed to examine the historical and philosophical roots of education in the United States; the role schools play in the socialization and preparation of children for their future place in society; the concerns of equal educational opportunity; the considerations of development and diversity; and related issues of educational theory and practice.

The Education Department accommodates students who have a variety of personal and professional goals. Some of the Department's students are interested in becoming teachers, whether in public school, private schools, or other educational settings such as teaching abroad. Some of the Department's students are interested in public service opportunities such as the Peace Corps or Americorps. Some of the Department's students are interested in education as future citizens, taxpayers, and parents. And some have an interest in education as it interfaces with their major fields of study, such as psychology, sociology, history, or politics.

The Education Department at Whitman works to provide coursework and educational experiences to meet any or all of our students' goals by offering students a minor in educational studies. There is no major in education.

Historical Background

The past decade has been one of substantial change for the Education Department. For many years, the Department was primarily concerned with the certification of students for public school teaching — students who successfully completed the Department's Washington State approved program were eligible for a Washington State Teacher Certification in either elementary or secondary education.

The number of students earning certification was not very large. Whitman usually produced the least number of teachers among all the institutions in Washington State. However, because of the Department's unique program where students were required to pursue a major in an academic subject, minor in education, and do their student teaching in a ninth semester so as not to reduce their academic coursework, the Department would argue that their certification students were among the best prepared in the State.

Number of Washington State Certifications issued, 1997 – 2006:

	Secondary	Elementary	Total
1997	6	8	14
1998	6	9	15
1999	6	5	11
1990	4	5	9
2001	10	2	12
2002	6	6	12
2003	5	7	12
2004	5	4	9
2005	3	1	4
2006	3	1	4
Dec. 2006	4	0	4

Not all students who minored in education sought certification. For a host of reasons, including those mentioned above, many students have been interested in earning a minor in education and the Department's enrollments have been strong for a small department.

Number of minors in education 1997 – 2006:

	Education Minors	Graduating Class	Percent
1997	20	319	6.3%
1998	17	293	5.8%
1999	17	345	4.9%
1990	22	322	6.8%
2001	30	322	9.3%
2002	21	353	5.9%
2003	16	373	4.3%
2004	18	340	5.3%
2005	14	352	4.0%
2006	26	405	6.4%

In fall 2002, the decision was made by the Education Department, the Dean of the Faculty, and the President to discontinue the Education Department's Washington State Certification Program. This change came about for several reasons. In order to maintain a certification program, the Education Department offered a minor in education, education courses required by the State (including "methods courses"), and the required student-teaching practica (student teaching). There was also a heavy administrative load that went along with the certification program, including one faculty member serving as the Director of Teacher Education. Managing such a program with only three full-time tenure-track positions was a challenge but the Department soldiered on producing excellent beginning teachers.

Over time, however, the maintenance of the program became increasingly untenable. New requirements and accountability measures mandated by the State of Washington called for additional courses and administrative responsibilities that were too much for the Department's few faculty. Subject matter requirements stretched the expertise of the faculty; the administrative demands created a situation where faculty were being forced to choose between running a quality certification program or doing the scholarship and service required by the institution for promotion and tenure. In 2002, the Department announced the termination of the certification program. This decision did not, however, result in many changes for the Department until recently.

The Department felt obligated to honor its commitment to its students to continue the certification program for any students admitted to the College prior to 2003. As a result, the last certification students finished their programs in Dec. 2006.

Description of the Department

The current Education Department has two full-time tenure-track faculty. One member is an assistant professor who will be considered for tenure and promotion in 2007 – 2008. The other full time faculty is a professor who is currently serving full-time as the Associate Dean of the Faculty. His position is being filled by a full-time visiting instructor who anticipates receiving his Ph.D. in education in 2007.

Since the decision to terminate the Washington State Certification program, and understanding that there are Whitman students interested in careers in public school teaching, the Department has forged an affiliation agreement with the University of Puget Sound's Graduate School of Education. (See page 26)

To date, at least four students have taken advantage of this agreement.

Education students wishing to teach are not limited to the University of Puget Sound. Recent graduates have gone on to do Master's of Arts in Teaching programs at the University of Colorado, Gonzaga, and University of Washington. In order to best serve students interested in pursuing a master's in teaching as well as students interested in education but not necessarily in teaching, the Department reorganized its curriculum in fall 2006. Under the new minor requirements, rather than take a sequence of courses, students take five courses from the Department's offerings. This allows students to design their education minor to suit their needs. The

AFFILIATION AGREEMENT COOPERATIVE 4-1 MASTER'S OF ARTS IN TEACHING PROGRAM

The University of Puget Sound School of Education and Whitman College agree to an affiliation in a Cooperative 4-1 Program that leads to a baccalaureate degree from Whitman College and, upon successful completion of the UPS program, a Masters of Arts in Teaching and a Washington State Teaching Certificate from the University of Puget Sound.

Formal application to the program must be made no later than the Whitman student's junior year. To be admitted to the program, the student must meet the current admission criteria at the time of graduation. Admission to the School of Education requires the approval of both Whitman College and the University of Puget Sound. The University of Puget Sound agrees to admit all Whitman 4-1 students meeting the requirements as set out in this document.

Department is also tailoring courses to help students meet the prerequisites for some master's/certification programs. For example, one common prerequisite for graduate programs is dedicated hours of classroom observation. To meet that need, the Department is offering a course (which does not count towards the minor) in Classroom Field Experiences.

Assessment

The Education Department had several methods to evaluate its certification students. Besides its own internal assessments by faculty evaluating student work in tests, papers, activities, and mock teaching situations, students were subject to a number of external evaluations as well. Most of the students' methods courses, for example, had a classroom component in which the students actively taught and interacted with public school students. In those settings, our students were evaluated not only by the college instructor, but also by the classroom teacher.

Assessment for students completing certification was rigorous. They were required to pass the State required WEST-B examination of basic skills and the Praxis II, a test of competence within the students' content areas. During their student teaching, students were evaluated routinely by the college instructor, the classroom teacher, and often others including the school principal. In addition to these assessments, student teachers were assessed by the Washington State required "pedagogy assessment" instrument — an instrument that documented their competency in a number of important pedagogical areas.

Beyond the internal assessments made by the Education Department of its own programs and courses based on student evaluations of courses, assessment of student performance in the field, and state requirements, the Department was also subject to external review by the State of Washington. In 2004, the Department hosted a review team from the Office of Public Instruction for the State of Washington. All standards under review were rated as "acceptable." Three standards: Unit Facilities, Modeling Best Professional Practices in Scholarship, and Unit Evaluation of Professional Development were singled out for special recognition.

Analysis and Appraisal

Despite changes and tragedy (one of the Department's members died unexpectedly in 2002) the Education Department at Whitman has offered strong programs in teacher preparation and educational studies. Placement data over the past several years shows that certification students have been successful in finding teaching positions. Those who did not, most often went straight to graduate school or to programs such as the Peace Corps, Whitman in China program, and Japan Exchange and Teaching program.

Given the wide range of interests of the students who minor in education, assessment of the minor in education program is challenging. The Department's classes and instructors are popular and well received as evidenced by good enrollments and solid teaching evaluations (one of the faculty was awarded Whitman College's Robert Y. Fluno Award for Distinguished Teaching in the Social Sciences in 2001; another in 2007). However,

it is difficult to assess the minor for three reasons. First, the minor is constructed in such a way that no two students will necessarily have the same “program” — students can take any five courses from the Department’s offerings that best suit their individual needs. Second, because of the way minors are devised at the College, the Department has no way to know exactly who is minoring in education — students may declare a minor any time. Third, minors at the College have no counterpart to the academic major’s senior assessment in major. There is no culminating experience by which to judge a student’s competence.

In the past, the Education Department has concentrated on the assessment of its certification program. Now, as the Department begins to transition from a primarily certification program to developing a more theoretically-based program in educational studies, it will need to devise ways to assess its program beyond the level of individual courses.

Given the challenges stated above, this will not be easy, and not always practical. One assessment device the Department has begun to formalize is participation in assessment of senior theses or projects. Students who minor in education often, but certainly not always, do their senior projects for their assessments in major on some educationally related subject — for example, the student who majors in psychology and minors in education and writes her senior thesis on an educationally related topic. Often, but again, not always, a member of the Education Department is asked to be on the student’s thesis committee. When this happens, it gives the education faculty a revealing look into how well the student has incorporated his or her education coursework into the senior thesis or project.

The Department is working to create a mechanism to make this process more formal: finding ways to identify students who are doing educationally related senior projects and either serve on those committees or find a way in which to be able to read and assess the educational component of those projects.

Projection

It will take the Education Department several years to fully develop a new Educational Studies minor. Much work needs to be done to create a curriculum that is beneficial to both those students who wish to continue on and become teachers, and those students who take an education minor for a more theoretical look into the world of school and educational practices.

The Department will continue to develop ways to assess the effectiveness of its program of study on students who incorporate educational studies into their subsequent academic work.

Accreditation Self-Study
Department of History

Goals of the Department

The Department of History strives to help students develop their understanding of the human condition through the ages. Students are taught to consider the possibilities and limitations faced in the past and their impact on the present. The practice of history requires creative visualization of the past, based on scrupulous attention to close reading of sources. The work culminates in critical analysis, careful synthesis, and clear writing. To meet these goals, the department has structured the major to offer both breadth and depth in history, focusing both on mastery of content and acquisition of critical skills that will be of use to students across the curriculum and in future endeavors. Because of the importance of history to a liberal arts education, the department has made a commitment to provide opportunity for both majors and non-majors at Whitman.

Description of the Department

Major and Minor

The History major demands both breadth and depth of study and is designed with flexibility allowing students to pursue particular interests. Majors are required to take courses covering three of the seven geographic areas offered by the department: Europe, US, Asia, Africa, Latin America, Middle East, and Ancient Mediterranean. They are also required to take at least two related courses in any single area, developing a deeper understanding of the region. They are required to take a course from a set designated as “comparisons and encounters,” courses focusing either on comparative history or on cultural encounters at a particular place and time. At least one class in the major must focus on a period before 1500CE. As seniors, each student completes a topical senior research seminar, which builds on previous coursework, providing more in-depth exploration of a particular topic in both common readings and individual research.

The bulk of a major’s work will be at the 200- and 300-level, where classes focus more narrowly on particular regions, countries, or topics. The geographic area, related classes, and comparisons and encounters requirements are filled at the 200- and 300-level. Majors are limited to six credits at the 100 level; only the pre-1500CE requirement can be filled by 100-level classes.

In addition to these flexible “menu-style” requirements, all students complete two required classes. History 201, “Historical Methodologies,” introduces students to the use of theory in history, to historiography, and to research methods. In addition to common readings and discussion, each student writes a substantial research paper based on primary sources. This class is generally completed by the fall of the junior year. History 401, “Topics in Comparative History,” is taken in the fall of the senior year. Two faculty members teach this class, each developing a comparative theme (examples have included nationalism, modernization, or empire). The students work through both cases before spending the final two weeks beginning work on a comparative topic of their own choosing, based on their previous course work, as preparation for the oral portion of the senior assessment in History.

This oral examination begins with the student’s presentation of a comparative analysis, and proceeds to a question and discussion period. The presentation includes three particular historical contexts located in three distinct geographic areas; topics have ranged from extractive industry to women’s protest movements, and from formation of governments after revolution to systems of racial and ethnic oppression. During preparation of a preliminary and final outline in the first part of spring semester, students are encouraged to deepen their comparative analyses, to apply questions from each field to the other two, and to explain the similarities and differences they find. In the oral examination the student should demonstrate both knowledge of content and analytical interpretation informed by comparison.

The written portion of the senior assessment has two parts. First, all seniors write a “book exam” – an essay assessing some work of history chosen in advance by the faculty. Students often convene their own seminars for discussion of the assigned book. Then each senior is examined in her or his chosen “field” (two related

courses in one area). In these examinations the students thus demonstrate both mastery of content (the field exam) and ability to deploy a skill set, evaluating argument and evidence of a historical work they have not been assigned in classes.

The student seeking to graduate with Honors in History must earn a grade of distinction on the oral exam and at least one of the two written exams. In addition, the honors student writes a substantial thesis – generally some one hundred pages of original work based in primary sources. The senior honors thesis is comparable to a master’s thesis at many universities.

The history minor generally takes five classes and must study more than one geographic area. History minors occasionally take History 201 but are not required to do so. Minors at Whitman do not include any evaluation other than the grade in the individual courses.

Although History is one of Whitman’s most rigorous majors, it remains one of the most popular. It is consistently ranked within the top five majors, and draws a steady stream of minors (see Table 1).

General Education/Distribution Courses

All History course offerings, except History 201 and 401, are open to non-majors. Other than the 400-level senior research seminars, very few History classes demand pre-requisites. As a result, many students take history classes out of interest or to fill distribution requirements in Social Science or Alternative Voices. The department offers 100-level classes in every geographic area, in loose rotation, with three to five such classes available every semester. These broad surveys serve simultaneously as a service to the campus by providing an opportunity to fill distribution requirements; as an introduction to the major for those considering history; and as an introduction to a region for history majors, who are allowed to take up to six credits at the 100 level.

Year	Majors	Minors
1995	24	13
1996	39	8
1997	25	10
1998	20	6
1999	31	9
2000	26	15
2001	21	8
2002	25	7
2003	26	8
2004	22	5
2005	26	10
2006	36	16
2007	[32]	

Table 1. History Majors and Minors

The department also regularly offers classes fulfilling requirements in other majors. These include: Classics, Asian Studies, Gender Studies, Latin American Studies, the new major in Race and Ethnic Studies, and (until the most recent revision of its requirements) Environmental Studies. Obvious connections with Politics, Sociology, English, Foreign Languages, Religion, and Art History draw many students from those areas as well. The department also contributes to both General Studies 145-146, “Antiquity and Modernity,” and 245, “Critical and Alternative Voices.” Including the Ancient historian, four of us teach in General Studies at any given time. Of these four slots, three rotate among the tenure-track faculty (as do required department courses). The fourth provides part of the funding for the visiting Ancient Mediterranean historian, and is tied to that position.

Faculty and Staff.

Nine faculty members teaching 7.66 FTEs belong to the History department (the remaining 1.33 FTEs are committed to General Studies). During the past decade seven of these have been tenure-track or tenured faculty; the other two have worked under renewable, non-tenure-track, one-year contracts. Beginning in the 2006-07 academic year one of these two renewable positions has been converted to tenure-track. The other position, in Ancient Mediterranean history, remains temporary at this time. Extensive turnover has marked the past decade, as the list below indicates. At present all faculty members hold the PhD and are professionally active scholars as well as committed teachers.

The Department is supported by the Maxey Hall Division I staff, and by student assistance with organizing maps, bulletin boards, videos, etc. Day to day operations of the Maxey Museum are carried out by student staff under the supervision of a faculty member.

Asia:

David Deal, to 2001
Brian Dott, 2002-present

United States:

David Schmitz
Nina Lerman

Medieval Europe:

Don King, to 1997
Andrea Winkler, 1997-2003
John Cotts, 2004-present

Early Modern Europe:*

Walt Weingart, to 2003

Modern Europe:

Fred Breit, to 1999
Lynn Sharp, 1999-present

Latin America:

Julie Charlip

Islamic World and Middle East (tenure-track as of 2003):

Marianne Kamp, 1997-2000
Don Matthews, 2000-2002
Jim Grehan, 2002-2003
Elyse Semerdjian, 2003-present

Africa (tenure-track as of 2006):

Jeremy Ball, 2003-2005
M. Bashir Salau, 2005-2006
Jacqueline Woodfork, 2006-

Ancient Mediterranean (untenurable):

Suzanne Martin, to 2000 (part-time)
Kyra Nourse, 2000-2001 (part-time) 2001-2006 (History and General Studies)
Kenneth Jones, 2006- (History and General Studies)

*In 2003, when Prof. Weingart retired, the tenure-track line was converted to Islamic World. See below for discussion. The table does not include sabbatical replacement faculty.

Assessment of the History Department

The History Department has implemented dramatic changes during the past ten years, centered primarily on globalization and comparative history. The move in these directions has entailed many deliberate trade-offs and experiments; details of the process are explained in the following section ("Analysis").

Staffing and curriculum

The department has chosen to commit three members to general studies teaching each year in order to create a replacement position (initially Middle East/Islamic World, then Africa). While this decision means a loss of two classes in each professor's area, we feel that we gain more overall in the addition of an entire geographic area.

When one of our three Europeanists retired, we converted that position to a position in the history of the Middle East and Islamic World. This change produced two significant results: It created stability in the Middle East field, which as a visiting position had been subject to significant turnover. And it created the opportunity to convert the replacement position to history of Africa, completing the planned globalization of the history curriculum. We recognize that this strategy has produced a gap in traditional coverage in the Early Modern period of European history. We feel, however, that the trade-off of increased global coverage more than compensates for the reduction in breadth of the European field as we send our students into a more interconnected, "globalized" world. When sabbatical replacement positions allow, we often target the early modern period to give students additional exposure in this area.

The expansion of teaching in Ancient Mediterranean history from two or three classes each year to a steady two-thirds of a full-time position has strengthened the role of ancient history in the department's program. We were extremely lucky to be able to keep one historian in this position for five years, but a visiting position is by nature temporary. It is likely that the position will turn over every one to three years. Such turnover will mean a steady stream of (often late-season) searches, and attendant disruption in the major program for students who have begun studies with one faculty member but must complete senior examinations with another. We continue to work with the administration on ways to solidify this position.

Given the vast changes we have made in the past decade (for details, see below), our current plan is to leave the curriculum in place for several years, and then assess its successes and challenges, perhaps in the summer of 2009. Our most immediate sights are set on smaller changes: digitizing the various departmental slide collections to make better use of computer technology and classroom projection equipment; consolidating and perhaps re-prioritizing budget expenditures to ensure the continuation of faculty research funding and student internships; mentoring new and sabbatical replacement faculty to ensure continuity of our strengths in teaching and advising; attending to the overlaps between the History program and related interdisciplinary programs in Asian Studies, Latin American Studies, Gender Studies, Race and Ethnic Studies, and in the future possibly some kind of Global or International Studies.

Procedures evaluating faculty

The present contract renewal system of the college ensures that colleagues are invited to evaluate junior faculty every two years and tenured faculty every five. While it is possible to treat these milestones in a casual or minimalist fashion, in the past five years (coincident with the several retirements) we have made use of them for mentoring and evaluation of each other's work. We have taken seriously the recommendation that a review letter writer should visit multiple classes, and we share syllabi and discuss techniques for lecture and discussion.

Several years ago, the department instituted a monthly gathering to discuss research, with each member taking a turn to share a scholarly work in progress. Through this process, we have become familiar with each other's scholarship and also with each other's critical and analytical style. It has, in essence, become another opportunity to observe our colleagues in action and serves as a different means of assessment than classroom observation. At the same time, these meetings have fostered great collegiality, opened conversations about scholarship, and provided wonderful opportunities for mentoring.

We take these means of observation and evaluation seriously, and in 2002 we denied tenure to a member of the department. While we are painstaking in our hiring processes, such screening does not always guarantee a

performance that meets the department's standards. As of 2005, we also assign two continuing members of the department to each new hire as mentor, establishing clear channels for questions, advice, and integration into the program.

Procedures evaluating students

History majors are evaluated collectively at several points in their departmental careers. The first time is in History 201, Historical Methodologies. This class introduces theory, providing part of the analytical grounding for the major, and requires significant research and writing. Finding that students who struggle in this class, or who do not take it seriously, have difficulty completing the major, we have recently instituted a minimum grade of C for all majors.

Another change has been to link the senior seminar, History 401, more closely to the oral exams. This class intentionally models the use of theory and analysis with case studies, then asks students to begin work on their oral presentations, which demand breadth of knowledge across three geographic areas and deep analysis of context-dependent similarities and differences. In the oral exam process, we have added a requirement that a preliminary outline and bibliography be approved and signed by the three evaluating professors. This policy requires more discussions between the student and faculty and has resulted in stronger performance on the oral examination.

In addition, all seniors write a 90-minute evaluative "blue book" essay about a book chosen by the faculty, demonstrating their ability to distill an author's argument and to assess the evidence mustered by that author. Finally, each student demonstrates depth in some particular area of study by writing essays (the "field exam") based in two related courses.

In addition, then, to the usual classroom methods of evaluation, which typically include paper writing, discussion, presentation, and written exams, the majors are evaluated at multiple points when their work can be compared to others at the same level of training.

Increasingly, our best students are choosing to also write an honors thesis, in addition to the standard evaluation exercises. We now routinely have three to five students each year seeking honors in major study, which requires the student to pass the oral and at least one of the written senior assessments with distinction in addition to writing a thesis. The thesis is a substantial commitment, since it involves a year-long research project based in extensive primary sources and offering original analysis. To recognize this accomplishment, the department now stages an annual honors conference, providing a forum at which students present their work to an audience of their faculty and peers. When possible, we invite a Whitman graduate who has gone on to earn the PhD in history to speak at this conference, further cementing the already strong link between Whitman students and alumni.

An informal measure of the students in the department is the achievement of our graduates. It is difficult to know what all graduates do in later years, but we know that in the past decade 15 to 20 graduates have gone on to advanced degrees in History, others have gone on to graduate work in international relations, social work, linguistics, and medicine, and many continue in education and law. Recent majors have served in both AmeriCorps and the Peace Corps, as well as in the Japanese Exchange and Teaching Program (JET) and the Whitman in China teaching program. Majors take a wide variety of jobs drawing on both content and skills in writing and analysis acquired in the major, including journalism, business, law, teaching, work in non-profit social services, and in the State Department. Although we cannot report their GRE scores, our students' success at entering strong graduate programs, often with financial support, offers indirect evidence that they are competing advantageously with students across the country (schools include, among others, University of Chicago, University of Wisconsin, University of Michigan, Cornell University, Emory University, Rutgers University, University of Texas, and University of Washington).

Analysis — A Decade of Change

Faculty

The History Department has changed dramatically in the past ten years, in both personnel and curriculum. At the time of the last accreditation self-study, we were just embarking on a long-term effort at globalization of the history program. In the last accreditation report, with the addition of a Latin American historian to the faculty, the department offered students four choices of “geographic areas”; at present we offer seven. Beginning in the fall of 2006, the department’s tenure-track faculty will cover US, European, Latin American, East Asian, Middle Eastern and Islamic, and African history. Our one ongoing temporary position focuses on the Ancient Mediterranean region.

The department has chosen to commit three members to general studies teaching each year in order to create one full-time replacement position; we also converted one position, in the wake of one retirement, reducing the faculty in European history from three to two to allow hiring in a new area. These choices have enabled us to create full-time positions in two important areas (Middle East/Islamic World, and Africa) without any net addition of personnel. The 2001 expansion of teaching in Ancient Mediterranean history from a one-third part-time position to a steady two-thirds of a full-time position (the last third is general studies) has established that area as an important part of the major for a growing number of students.

Curriculum

The significant turnover in faculty has meant extensive changes in course offerings, both in the addition of new courses and the rewriting of older ones. Our attention to globalizing the major has led to fundamental change in the major, based on extended discussion, trial, and evaluation.

Ten years ago, the department required all majors to complete a two-semester sequence in “Western Civilization.” Our first effort, then, was to join the national shift to a World History survey. We planned to co-teach this class for two consecutive years, alongside the Western Civilization sequence (allowing majors to choose either path) and then evaluate our options. We hired two senior majors each of these years to sit in on the world history class and report their own assessment of the project. We extended the experiment to a third year with a single faculty member teaching the course. During that final year, we invited Michael Adas, co-author of one of the standard world history textbooks, to join us in discussion of our curriculum when he was on campus for a lecture. Our conclusion, based on our own experience, the students’ reports, and Adas’s suggestions, was that teaching the world history survey in a small liberal arts college highlights the weaknesses of the course (rapid, superficial coverage; faculty teaching outside of their expertise) at the expense of the conceptual strengths of the exposure. With Adas’s encouragement, we focused on the goals of such a program: comparative history; understanding of difference in cultural perspective; exploration of encounters between cultures.

We redesigned the major requirements to incorporate these conceptual goals without losing students in the whirlwind of civilizations of the standard course. First, because we strive not to privilege any one part of the globe over any other, we decided to create 100-level offerings in each geographic area we offer, and to assume a student might enter the major through any of these. We dropped the Western Civilization requirement, allowing the faculty whose teaching covers that material to redesign the 100-level offerings in Ancient Mediterranean and European history (the result is four courses covering roughly the scope of the old two-semester sequence). At present the student is allowed to count two 100-level classes toward the major, but need not complete any (the student who enters the major through an upper-level class need not take the survey courses). Second, we concluded that the global and comparative purposes of world history would be best served in upper-level courses grounded in our own fields. We agreed we would each teach a class fulfilling a new requirement called “Comparisons and Encounters,” so every student would explore world historical themes but with greater depth of understanding. Finally, we concluded that one of the strengths of the old survey requirement was that it forced students to consider earlier time periods, so now require that each major takes at least one course focusing on a period before 1500CE.

We have also continued improving the remaining required classes, History 201 and 401. Recognizing that History 201, the methodologies class, had not been closely examined in years, we held a workshop in which we discussed our goals for the course and the content and skills we expected students to have mastered by the time they had completed it. We collectively agreed on a set of topics and goals and have had periodic meetings since to assess texts and engage student comments. History 201 now incorporates more explicit attention to the uses of theory in history and to the ways theoretical approaches shape interpretation, along with a continued emphasis on research methods. History 401, also revised in this process, is explicitly focused on comparison (the title has been changed from “The Art of History” to “Topics in Comparative History”), and is more closely tied to preparation for the oral examination. We have added an additional step to the orals preparation process in the spring, requiring a preliminary outline and bibliography in February prior to the final outline in March. All students are thereby required to meet with their three examining faculty members at several points, and what was in some ways a mysterious hazing ritual has become a more transparent and structured educational process.

Facilities and equipment

The department now possesses a digital camera for archival research, a video camera for work in oral history, and a scanner allowing a wider range of visual evidence to be brought to the classroom. We have updated and reorganized our map collection, as well.

The expansion of the library has been crucial for the department; we expect to rely on printed (not digital) publications for many decades in the future. The very recent professionalization and reorganization of the College Archives hold enormous promise for student research and for teaching research methods. As finding aids are created and archival materials stored with an eye to preservation and careful access, we expect to incorporate the rich and varied resources of the college’s formerly languishing collections into the training of our students.

The small Maxey Museum has also undergone a rebirth since the last accreditation, partly thanks to the systematization mandated by the regulations of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). While it has lost physical space to classroom and office renovations, it now operates with a small staff of student curators who research, design, and mount several exhibits each year both in the museum’s exhibit area and in several public display cases. Artifacts can be used for classroom teaching, and further incorporation into the US history curriculum is now possible.

Budget

The largest budgetary change, a bequest to the department, occurred just after the last accreditation self-study. Although we initially planned a program of student internship support, faculty research funding, and media acquisition, we have since committed a large portion of this money to the full-time position in Ancient Mediterranean history. This non-tenure line position is now funded one-third by the department, one-third by the dean (in return for the department’s responsibility for the Maxey Museum), and one-third by general studies. This commitment has meant the reduction of money available for student summer internships we can offer, summer and sabbatical research funding for faculty, and the acquisition of maps and videos for department use. But we have made the curriculum in Ancient Mediterranean history a priority, given its importance not only to the department but also to the College. Ancient history is required in the Classics major, and it clearly supports the general studies program: at present all Whitman students begin their college careers reading authors such as Homer, Plato, Greek playwrights, and Virgil, often provoking questions about the contexts of the works. We do expect to be working with the new Dean of Faculty to stabilize the position.

Accreditation Self-Study
Latin American Studies Program

A. Program Goals

The Latin American Studies program aims to guide students in the critical analysis of the region known as “Latin America.” At its core, the program trains students to think in an interdisciplinary manner: students are encouraged and challenged to integrate coursework in the humanities, sciences, and social studies in order to develop a complex and nuanced understanding of the region. Whitman’s Latin American Studies program brings together studies in Latin American history, cultural studies, political economy, environmental studies, Latin American literature, film, and art, and Spanish language studies. With slight individual disciplinary differences, the program incorporates analysis and study of North, Meso-, and South America, along with parts of the Caribbean. The program also includes the study of the Latino/a immigrant and transnational Latin American experience.

B. Program History and Description

1. *Major and Minor*

Interest in a Latin American Studies major began within two years of the addition of a Latin American History position in 1993. However, without sufficient interest and faculty representation, the program did not get off the ground and instead could only be offered as an Individually Planned Major (IPM). In 1994, an International Studies IPM was granted approval with an emphasis on Latin America. In 1999 and 2001, under the direction of Professor Eldon “Bud” Kenworthy in the Politics Department and Professor Julie Charlip in History, two Latin American Studies IPM’s were completed. After the untimely death of Professor Kenworthy in 1999, until 2003, Professor Charlip and Professor Celia Weller (Spanish Language) refused to approve any new Latin American Studies IPM’s on the basis that a truly interdisciplinary degree from Whitman needed participation from at least 3 faculty members from different departments. The two professors, however, aware of student interest, did devise two Latin American Studies minor programs (one for Spanish majors) to somewhat satisfy those students who wanted to major in Latin American Studies. Between 2000 and 2004, five students minored in Latin American Studies.

In 2003 and 2004, the College added three new tenure-track faculty members (in Spanish, Anthropology, and Politics) with expertise in Latin America. In 2005, a group of faculty members won approval for the current Latin American Studies Major and Minor Program. In 2005-2006, two students were awarded Latin American Studies Majors under the newly instated program.

2. *Faculty and Curriculum*

In the 2005-6 academic year, the Latin American Studies (LAS) program had five faculty members who either offered courses for the major and minor, served as thesis readers, or a combination of two. In 2006, there will be seven active faculty members contributing to the major and minor. Other faculty members participate in the program by offering occasional courses that count for LAS credit (Professor Paul Apostolidis in Politics and Professor Gary Rollefson in Anthropology). Approximately twenty-four regularly offered courses fulfill the Latin American studies requirements, and a number of others appear in the catalog on a temporary basis, offered either as special topics courses or as part of the teaching load of visiting faculty members. Currently, the Latin American Studies does not offer independent study credits.

The Latin American Studies Program does not have a permanent faculty member whose position responsibilities are partially or fully in the program. A rotating faculty director administers curricular and budgetary activities in conference with other participating faculty members. All “core” faculty members of the program who are in residence (i.e., not on sabbatical) share in major and thesis advising responsibilities.

History 188 (Modern Latin American History) serves as the introductory course of the major and is a requirement of all students. A survey of nineteenth- and twentieth-century history, the course takes an interdisciplinary approach combining social, cultural, economic, and political perspectives to break down common myths and stereotypes of the region. The course is taught through lecture and discussion.

A series of other elective course offerings from Anthropology, Spanish, Art History, Politics, and History form the basis of the LAS major. Students, in concert with their faculty advisors select a course of study that matches their thematic interests and prepares them to complete their senior thesis projects.

C. Assessment of Latin American Studies Program

1. *Student Majors and Minors*

For students completing the minor in Latin American Studies, our principle means of assessment are the examinations, papers, and other assignments conducted on a course-by-course basis. Aside from grades, no assessment of LAS minors exists.

By contrast, Latin American Studies majors are assessed in four fundamental areas:

- performance in individual courses
- participation in the senior seminar
- written senior thesis
- oral defense of thesis

Like other interdisciplinary programs on campus, it is difficult to judge an individual student's performance as a LAS major or minor from coursework, given that faculty expectations range widely and may reflect different expectations grounded in their chosen field and the past performance of their other majors. An aggregated assessment (e.g., cumulative GPA) for all LAS courses may be the only way to judge student learning.

How to best prepare and assess students in the areas of the senior seminar, senior thesis, and oral defense is a topic of current discussion among the LAS faculty. We identify two interrelated challenges: 1) how to determine a common way to assess the quality, form, and content of a thesis; and 2) how best to encourage students to engage in interdisciplinary thinking in their explorations of Latin America.

In 2005, LAS instituted LAS 495 Latin American Studies Thesis Workshop, a two-credit course offered every fall semester. Because there were only two senior students pursuing thesis work in the first year of the course offering, 495 ran in fashion more akin to a traditional independent study. Students were asked to devise a syllabus based on readings relevant to their chosen thesis topic. They then met half the semester with each of their two primary thesis readers (professors whose interests and expertise were most lined up with their own). Their final project was a written research proposal, including a preliminary outline for the thesis and a timeline for their production of drafts in the spring. While this approach worked well as a one-time option for such a small cohort, problems were identified. The key problem with this approach was that it did not bring LAS students and faculty into a dialogue about interdisciplinary thinking around Latin American studies.

To remedy the problem mentioned above, a new course has been devised. This course, team-taught by two faculty members (with contributions from other faculty), takes as its express goal to help "the preparation of a senior thesis paper from its conception to a complete draft." To that end, students begin the course by reading a series of short articles and book chapters and viewing a small number of films on a particular topic central to the history and culture of Latin American Studies. (These topics are derived from common themes of intellectual inquiry that have (for better or worse) shaped what is commonly thought of as "Latin American Studies.") For the 2006-2007 academic year, the topic is "Violence." Faculty members from Anthropology, Spanish, and History will each contribute short pieces from their fields to prompt students to consider the theme from a variety of different disciplinary foci

and through different types of media (fiction, ethnography, film, and historical writings). Students are assessed on their abilities to critically analyze and synthesize readings and other media and to draw conclusions across disciplines. The second half of the course is dedicated to the mechanics of the thesis process: developing a research topic and questions, preliminary bibliographic searches, and organizing a writing schedule. In addition to class participation, students are assessed on the basis of a written research proposal. Students are assigned a grade based on the rigor of their research question and their preliminary research efforts, as well as their ability to integrate materials, ideas, and themes explored in previous coursework into the proposed research project. In the fall semester, students must also assemble a committee of three faculty members who are in-residence (not on sabbatical). One faculty member serves as the thesis advisor and primary reader; the other two readers serve as secondary readers who read and comment on draft versions of the thesis. Students are required to circulate a thesis writing schedule (outlining due dates for drafts) and are expected to meet with each of their thesis committee members to discuss developing iterations of their thesis work. So far, projects have consisted of secondary (“library-based”) research. It is the hope of the program that future students will carry out primary research projects for their theses based on ethnographic or archival research.

During spring semester, Latin American Studies majors register for LAS 496, Latin American Studies Senior Thesis. This two-credit offering serves as an independent course (no in-class time) whereby students are actively engaged in writing their theses. Regular communication between thesis students and their thesis committee members – as well as between members of the thesis committee – help to ensure that everyone is “on the same page” in terms of the expectations of student work. In early April, students turn in their final thesis copy to their committee and wait the scheduling of an oral defense.

The letter grade assigned to each thesis (determined collectively by the three-person senior thesis committee) reflects the overall intellectual sophistication of the project (including the rigor of the research question, data collection methods, and findings), the student’s ability to incorporate faculty criticism, feedback, and suggestions from previous drafts, and, to a lesser degree, the student’s oral defense of the project. During the oral defense students are expected to engage their committee in an intellectual conversation about their work and to field questions concerning the project. In a test of their oral communication skills, students are also judged on their abilities to address criticisms, respond to alternative findings of their data, to more fully articulate arguments made in the written thesis, and more generally, to extrapolate from their project and place its core ideas and themes in a more global and comparative context. During the defense, a strong emphasis is placed on encouraging students to reflect critically on the validity of “Latin American Studies” as an integrated area of study. At the completion of the defense, students may pass, pass with distinction, or fail their oral defenses. Students who fail their oral defense may retake it after consultation with each member of their thesis committee to determine how to go about remedying the perceived deficiencies and/or problems with their first defense.

Two students graduated under the new LAS major in 2005-2006 academic year. While both the feedback from students themselves (in solicited evaluations) and discussion among participating LAS faculty raised the need to make small changes in the process (see “challenges” below), the overall experience was effective. Students produced defensible thesis documents and both were granted “pass” grades in their oral defense.

2. Assessment of Faculty and Curriculum

With the exception of the LAS 495 and 496 (Senior Thesis Workshop and Senior Thesis), all of the courses that count toward the LAS major and minor fall under other disciplines on campus. Their evaluation—of both course and instructor—are the responsibility of their home departments and the College’s personnel committee. The ability to rate our classes and instructors in their effectiveness as LAS faculty is hampered by this fact, if not made impossible. In future self-assessments, this may be an area to focus on, either by soliciting from students an overall review of the major (in the form of a

narrative letter written to the program as is done in the Departments of Psychology and Anthropology) or through another mechanism.

It is also important to mention that the LAS program is largely comprised of junior faculty. Only two of its faculty are tenured and one is retiring at end of the 2005-2006 academic year. Still, we take this fact as a strength, not a weakness. All of the faculty members are active scholars working in interdisciplinary circles of Latin Americanists, including the Latin American Studies Association (LASA).

D. Assessment of the Latin American Studies Program

In many respects, it is too early to provide a comprehensive assessment of the LAS program. With only one year of official status as a major and minor program, there is little data to concretely evaluate the performance of students, faculty, and the curriculum. Moreover, the addition of two new faculty members to LAS in 2006-7 will no doubt play an important role in shaping the future of the program. The next two years will surely consist of an on-going self-assessment and discussion about how to improve both the major and minor. Particular emphasis will undoubtedly be placed on re-thinking the thesis capstone assignment.

To the extent that student interest is an indicator of current success, our increasing numbers of majors and minors demonstrate that the program is attractive and vibrant. There will be five senior LAS majors in 2006-7; in 2008, 4 students (so far) are slated to graduate with an LAS degree. As the campus overall becomes more international and meets challenges to “globalize” the curriculum, Latin American Studies will clearly grow as a program choice for students.

1. Questions to Pursue

Again, keeping in mind that LAS as a major/minor program is still in its infancy, there are a number of questions our faculty are asking of the program as we move ahead. The central question is the following: does this program meet its intended goals of encouraging students to think in an interdisciplinary manner? In review of the 2005-6 academic year senior thesis projects, the LAS faculty repeatedly returned to the question of what made this set of theses *specifically* LAS and not, say, theses in anthropology or politics with a topical focus in Latin America. The question gets at the heart of trying to get students to approach their topic from a variety of thematic, disciplinary, and theoretical angles. In terms of curriculum development, it prompts questions about how we might go about structuring our LAS required courses (History 188 and the 495 seminar) to more broadly instill interdisciplinary thinking. These questions run up against challenges the program faces with respect to staffing and resources (see below).

Another persistent question of the program: Does LAS offer opportunities to use inductive logic, do hands-on work, and service learning? Collectively, the LAS faculty is committed to seeing students explore Latin America through hands-on experiences in a variety of forms, including short- and long-term study abroad, volunteer activities, service learning, and research. Students are encouraged to study abroad, to carry out research, and to volunteer in Latin America and in the Walla Walla community. (NB: Nearly 20 percent of the city of Walla Walla’s population is Latino/a.) With increased staffing, it the hope of the program to make service learning and/or study abroad a required component of the LAS major. However, to instate this requirement would necessitate that a faculty member be assigned to each student during this period in order to guide their activities, monitor their progress, and assess their learning and effort. A lack of staffing makes this idea difficult to implement at this time.

2. Challenges.

The strength of Latin American Studies at Whitman, like other similar programs on campus (Asian Studies, Gender Studies, and Race and Ethnic Studies, for example), comes from its grounding in an interdisciplinary approach. In large part, this component of the program upholds the central tenet of the College’s mission statement: to provide “a well-rounded liberal arts and science undergraduate

education.” However, achieving a truly interdisciplinary focus is also our greatest challenge. Like the Gender Studies program (see Gender Studies Accreditation study), LAS must strive to balance the necessities of a standardized program while simultaneously capitalizing on the individual strengths and expertise of its varied faculty. We must work to forge commonalities between faculty and student interests while retaining our particular perspectives.

Assessment, as mentioned above, will continue to be a challenge for an interdisciplinary program like ours. In addition to the accountability LAS faculty have to the departmental reviews of their courses and to the Personnel Committee, it would be useful to engage in a periodic internal review of the program. This review may take a couple of different forms, including, though not limited to, a review of course syllabi for History 188 and LAS 495, as well as a sharing of syllabi between faculty members teaching LAS-approved course across the curriculum. Also, it would be useful for LAS faculty to engage in peer evaluation of the introductory and thesis workshop courses on a regular basis. However, since 495 is a team-taught course, some ad hoc peer evaluation is already underway.

A second challenge of the program is the assessment of our senior majors. During the next academic year, the LAS faculty will closely monitor the senior thesis process. We will look closely to see whether the process fosters the kind of interdisciplinary analysis stated in the program’s goals. We will also be evaluating other non-thesis models for senior assessment that are currently used on campus as potential replacements if the thesis process proves to fall short of our goals. One proposal we are seriously considering entails requiring students to do written examinations in their senior year in place of writing a thesis.

Overall, the next couple of years will be formative ones for Whitman’s Latin American Studies Program. The addition of two new tenure-line faculty to the program (both in the Spanish Department) and a greater formalization of the senior seminar and thesis process will no doubt shape the future direction of the major and minor. A lack of any specifically designated LAS faculty (i.e., faculty whose teaching and advising of LAS students counts as part of their overall teaching load) will prove to be the program’s greatest challenge.

Faculty

(To view the CVs of LAS faculty members, see the accreditation documents of their home departments).

Aaron Bobrow-Strain, Politics
Julie Charlip, History
Marie Clifford, Art History and Visual Studies
Jason Pribilsky, Anthropology
Gary Rollefson, Anthropology
Nohemy Solórzano-Thompson, Spanish
Celia Weller, Spanish

Accreditation Self-Study
Department of Politics

Departmental Goals

As the Whitman College Catalog states, the primary objective of the Politics Department “is to cultivate in students a critical ability to interpret political questions from a variety of perspectives.” In educating Whitman students in politics, we strive to enable students to become practiced at analyzing political institutions, movements, concepts, and events from multiple and intersecting vantage points. We challenge students to understand the connections, for example, between institutional development and national identity, or between environmental policy and social movement strategy. At the same time, our major stresses personal flexibility and requires students to cultivate a self-motivated, individual direction for academic study, culminating in their senior Thesis. In more substantive terms, finally, we aim to equip students with the intellectual tools for critically engaging political problems in a rapidly globalizing society, where traditionally fixed reference points for political authority and agency are undergoing profound change and where interdisciplinary strategies of knowledge have become indispensable for responsible democratic citizenship. In all these ways, we aspire to locate the Politics Department on the cutting edge of Whitman College’s collective mission to promote “rigorous learning and scholarship,” to encourage “creativity, character, and responsibility,” and to foster “intellectual vitality, confidence, leadership, and the flexibility to succeed in a changing technological, multicultural world.” We are also profoundly dedicated, as a Department and through our curricular offerings, to the College’s recently much-intensified commitment to deepening the diversity of this campus.

Description of the Major

The distinctive structure of the Politics major continues to be integral to our efforts to enable students to develop their capacities to think and write critically about the political world. Above all, that is because it encourages students to engage political issues from wide range of different vantage points and helps them avoid narrow, superficial approaches to political phenomena. At most liberal arts colleges throughout the United States, as in most graduate schools, the “political science” major is organized according to four primary subfields: American politics, international relations, comparative politics, and political theory. Virtually without exception, majors at such colleges are required to take an introductory course in political science as well as several courses in each of these subfields. For decades, the political science major at Whitman followed the conventional model. However, in the mid-1980s the department concluded that this structure of the major fell well short of meeting the appropriate goals of a liberal arts undergraduate education in several ways. First, it offered no place for the interdisciplinary studies that are increasingly central rather than peripheral to the study of politics in contemporary times, such as political economy, law, environmental politics, and the politics of gender. Second, the conventional model did not encourage students to integrate material from their various courses and instructors. Third, the traditional system discouraged instructors from teaching in ways conducive to cross-field fertilization. (For a more detailed historical study of the discipline of political science and grounding of this critique, see Timothy Kaufman-Osborn, “Dividing the Domain of Political Science: On the Fetishism of Subfields,” *Polity* 38:1 (January 2006): pp. 41-71.)

To overcome these difficulties, the faculty adopted a new major structure in 1990 which we maintain today, and which we find more valuable than ever given the expansion of our faculty, the interests of our rapidly growing population of student majors, and epochal trends in contemporary political life. To complete the major, we require students to take at least twelve credits of courses at the 300 and 400 level, exclusive of the required Senior Seminar and thesis (or honors thesis); and we also require successful completion of both the Senior Seminar and their thesis (or honors thesis). Students must earn a total of thirty-four Politics credits; Senior Seminar yields four credits, while the thesis (or honors thesis) counts for two credits. As the catalog notes, “the program for the major is to be planned by the student and his or her adviser so as to ensure adequate breadth in the courses taken.”

This more open structure of the major has the great advantage of offering much more flexibility to students and faculty alike, thereby ensuring a higher quality of education in the major than had been possible prior to 1990.

Since the burden for devising a suitable course of study rests with the adviser/advisee relationship, politics majors can tailor their programs to their specific interests, subject to the advice and consent of their adviser. Students also find it much easier to study abroad and to participate in the increasing variety of interdisciplinary programs at Whitman (e.g., Gender Studies, Latin American Studies, Environmental Studies) without being constrained by the need to fit required courses into complicated schedules. Faculty members, in turn, are much more free to develop innovative courses that meet changing student interests and respond to new developments in political history, and to lead students in pursuing the complex connections between different avenues of political inquiry rather than artificially limiting the questions they pose. As our departmental faculty has grown in size, we have shaped the character of our faculty to include individuals whose intellectual interests crisscross the conventional subfield boundaries and involve interdisciplinary components. Hence, we have developed a faculty profile and a major structure that are mutually invigorating – and the result is that the students are continually challenged to produce outstanding, critical work and succeed in doing so.

The Senior Seminar and Thesis work together to ensure that as students complete the major, on the one hand, they synthesize what they have learned and hone their appreciation for a diversity of perspectives on political problems, while on the other hand, they pursue a more narrowly specialized research project of their own design in unprecedented depth. A team of four faculty members collaboratively teaches Senior Seminar, giving these instructors an opportunity to learn from each other and providing students with the unusual learning experience that comes from having different faculty members engaging in the same conversation with them. Each year, the faculty members teaching the course agree on several texts that supply varying analytical approaches to the study of political power – e.g., emphasizing dynamics of institutional authority, elements of political culture, or the political implications of socioeconomic processes. This central theme keeps the course open to the contributions of students regardless of the prior emphases of their individual programs of study, while evoking plenty of opportunities for them to learn from one another. Senior Seminar also brings our expectations of students' critical abilities to a new level, since students themselves are responsible for leading most of the sessions in groups that prepare discussion leadership strategies, with the guidance of the faculty, in advance. Finally, Senior Seminar fosters an important sense of corporate identity among our students, not just despite but indeed because of the varied individual interests they each bring to the table. The Thesis, in turn, demands that the student exercise an extensive degree of initiative and autonomy in designing a research question and carrying out a plan, in consultation with her or his thesis readers, for developing a sophisticated answer to it that both displays mastery of relevant literature and presents an original argument. In many cases, students elect to do original primary research, which is something faculty members certainly encourage when appropriate. Senior Seminar involves several assignments and class discussions that prompt students to begin their review of literature and start developing a method and an argument for their thesis.

While we have kept intact the basic structure of the major that was newly described in the 1997 accreditation report, there have also been two particularly significant changes in our department since that year. First, both our faculty and our student major populations have grown substantially. We now have seven tenured or tenure-track faculty members (six FTE positions, with two faculty members sharing one of these positions) and will be newly filling an eighth (i.e., a seventh FTE position) in 2006-2007. As a result, we have been entering an era when we have more depth in more, different areas of political study than has ever been the case previously for the Department, including some fields less typical of politics departments in small liberal arts colleges such as African politics, political geography, ancient and medieval political theory, and political economy. Our new faculty members have greatly added to our ability to train students in modes of political inquiry that cross traditional subfield and disciplinary borders, for instance combining intellectual history and political theory, gender analysis and international politics, and cultural studies and social movement analysis. As a result, the faculty members of the Politics Department now play key roles in literally every interdisciplinary program at the College outside of the sciences: Environmental Studies, Gender Studies, Latin American Studies, Asian Studies, Race and Ethnic Studies, and also the General Studies or "Core" program, for which one of our department members is serving as the College's Coordinator in 2007-2008. We are also strongly represented in the group of faculty that is undertaking a new initiative to enhance Global Studies at Whitman.

Our student major population has grown in step with the increase in faculty size. In the years 1996-2000, we graduated an average of 35.4 majors in Politics or Politics-Environmental Studies (in which all students take the Politics Senior Seminar, have a Politics Thesis adviser, and earn substantial Politics course credits) every year. In 2001-2006, however, that number jumped to 40.3, with 48 graduating seniors in 2006 and a group of about the same size in the senior program for 2006-2007. Politics has the highest number of graduates per tenure-track position (1996-2005) of any major in the College, and the highest number of Junior/Senior majors per faculty member (April 2006). Our courses are virtually always fully enrolled, with waiting lists, to the point where it has become somewhat of a problem: first-year students, especially, find it difficult to get in to any Politics courses at all; occasionally, we have to adjust course limits after registration periods to make sure that juniors who need Politics courses to complete their major requirements can do so; once, several years ago, students actually staged a sit-in outside the office of the College president to demand relief from enrollment pressures in our courses. In light of these issues, the College has expanded our staffing, but the problem continues since the new faculty members have been highly successful and have drawn increasing numbers of additional students to the major. Needless to say, this is a difficulty we are in many ways glad to have to face; as we note below, however, there are some minor changes we are contemplating that would help alleviate some of this problem.

The second important change in our department since 1997 has been a marked step-up in innovation with regard to course-affiliated experiential and community-based learning projects. Three of our faculty members, in particular, are keenly interested in these kinds of pedagogies and it is no exaggeration to say that they are leading the College in its more general move toward greater engagement with learning endeavors that combine traditional classroom discussions and the critical reading of texts with on-site education beyond the campus borders, sometimes in the local community and other times in places far from Walla Walla. One faculty member was awarded a grant from the Mellon Foundation to fund two initial iterations of a new project called "Semester in the West." This program took students on a semester-long trip throughout the US West to bring them into personal contact with a tremendous variety of political actors on multiple sides of contentious issues related to the environment, including a wide variety of environmental activists, "wise use" activists, ranchers, loggers, miners, local politicians, Native Americans, and community activists.

Another faculty member designed a research seminar for which students collaboratively authored a (nearly) comprehensive report on social conditions facing Latinos in the State of Washington, addressing twelve different areas including education, labor, health care, domestic violence, and voting rights, among others. The students in this class carried out their research in partnership with professionals in the local community, performed interviews of marginalized persons in various Latino communities in Washington State, and ended the semester by conducting public education projects that included a local Town Meeting, an advocacy visit to Olympia to meet with State legislators, and a number of appearances in local and regional media. This same professor also ran classes on US Social Policy and US Campaigns and Elections where students investigated occupational safety and health problems and electoral participation impediments among regional immigrant workers, in partnership with a local meatpackers' union.

Still another member of the department has developed an intensive, ten-day experiential education program on the U.S.-Mexico border, now in its second year. This program, taught in conjunction with the faculty member's courses on Latin American politics and Third World Development, encourages students to wrestle with competing perspectives on immigration policy, national security, the drug war, and trade policy through personal contact with stakeholders on these critical issues located in the region. Visiting both sides of the border, students meet with government officials, community organizers, maquiladora factory managers, Border Patrol agents, religious activists, immigration rights advocates, and Mexican factory workers. Students also live with families in a poor Mexican neighborhood, perform group research exercises, interview migrants waiting to cross the border, and conduct an economic market basket survey to assess the buying power of maquiladora wages. After returning from the trip, participants write reflection papers (for independent study credit) that link their experiences on the border to issues in their home communities. In addition, this same department member teaches a course on "Whitman in the Global Food System" that combines academic

learning with community-based group research projects examining different aspects of the local “foodshed.” Last year, students designed and carried out research projects that assisted a local group working to establish a community food co-op, for instance by surveying food co-ops elsewhere in the US and conducting local resource assessments. Students presented their class work in a public forum and in a series of planning documents.

To conclude this description of our major, we would simply note that the name of our department – the Department of Politics (rather than Political Science) – encapsulates our distinctive approach to the study of politics at Whitman. This title is meant to convey our view that many intellectual strategies, including but not limited to those conventionally deemed scientific, are appropriate and necessary to the study of politics. Such strategies, as our majors come to learn, also include historical analysis, cultural critique, the scrutiny of transnational phenomena, and philosophical inquiry, as well as modes of knowledge that respond to the insights of non-Western and other non-dominant fields of political thought. They may also involve experiential or community-based learning, and often will need to draw deeply on the prodigious intellectual resources of other academic disciplines.

Assessment of the Department

This assessment of the success of the Politics Department in meeting its goals is based on the following sources of information: an appraisal of recent senior Thesis work and performance in the Senior Assessment in the Major (SAM); student evaluations of the Senior Seminar; a survey of the College awards for teaching and faculty/student research won by department faculty members and students; an account of student fellowships and honors from outside the College received by Politics majors; recognition of the leadership of Politics faculty members and students in guiding the College toward important new directions in interdisciplinary and experiential education; and curricular elements that contribute to the College’s diversity emphasis. In light of this assessment, we will undertake a further, systematic review of our major program and design appropriate revisions in the curriculum in the near future, most likely 2007-08 and possibly with the aid of external reviewers.

Student work on the Senior Thesis, along with the post-thesis Oral Examination that, together with the thesis, makes up our Senior Assessment in the Major (SAM), has demonstrated that our majors are developing both the critical abilities and the sense for diverse yet complementary analytical approaches that we aim for them to acquire. First, students’ theses consistently show that they are building on and extending lines of inquiry that they began in their coursework. Both of the students who were co-recipients this past year of our award for Best Thesis, for example, manifestly did this. One student combined a theoretical approach to interpreting the politics of visual culture she had learned with one professor with aspects of the study of African politics she had undertaken with another faculty member, in exploring the politically salient conceptions of Africa that popular photographic images produce. The other student combined primary research she had conducted in India while on Study Abroad with analytical tools she had developed in her courses on environmental politics to critically evaluate the politics of the expanding eco-tourism industry in India. Both these theses also provide fine illustrations of how our department is succeeding in fostering interdisciplinary thinking habits among our students, and in preparing them for engagement with politics in a more global society.

Second, and taking a more general perspective on senior achievements in the SAM: most of our majors meet or exceed our expectations; it is rare that any student fails this assessment, and when on occasion this happens they quickly set things aright by revising their work in accordance with detailed demands provided by the faculty; and we infrequently deny Honors to an Honors candidate. Nevertheless, we do see room for improvement in this area of our curriculum. The events of a student failing to submit an acceptable Thesis or of a denial of Honors should be even less frequent than they are at present. And while we are seeing plenty of excellent or very good work that involves the use of theory to illuminate empirical political phenomena, as well as a fair number of theses that rely on fieldwork or other forms of original empirical research, we are not satisfied with the extent to which most of our students are grounding their questions, arguments, and methods within a rich, critical appraisal of the relevant scholarly literature on their topics. Therefore, we are

considering some adjustments to our senior program that would enhance students' thesis preparation. Our plan is to experiment with several new components of Senior Seminar in the fall of 2006 that would prompt students to solidify their Thesis topics and demonstrate their command of the literature earlier than is now the case. We also plan to expand students' opportunities within Senior Seminar for engaging in Thesis planning and development with their Thesis adviser and peers. For example, we will probably design exercises in which students critically examine the methods of the authors on the syllabus, along with the ways these authors locate themselves in relation to other scholarly work; students would then reflect on how understanding this could inform their approaches to their own theses.

At the conclusion of Senior Seminar each fall, every student fills out an evaluation of the course. Given the pivotal structural role of this seminar for the major, as described above, these evaluations have special significance for assessing the quality of the study of politics at Whitman. The evaluations ask students for specific feedback on the success of the seminar in developing students' analytical and critical sophistication, improving their writing ability, fostering productive discussions, preparing students to write their theses, and introducing students to stimulating texts. Each summer, in turn, the faculty members who are to teach senior seminar the following fall meet in order to revise the syllabus in light of student evaluations as well as our sense of what worked well and what needs improvement. Hence, our assessment of the students' work in this course is regularly connected to reforms and adjustments in the syllabus.

Student evaluations repeatedly confirm that they gain great benefit out of their responsibilities for leading discussions: as we have hoped, students sense that these exercises help them develop a more autonomous approach to analytical thinking. Also, students have been particularly enthusiastic about an innovation we made several years ago that requires them to make oral presentations to their peers (and their primary thesis adviser) while in the preliminary stages of their research; although as we have indicated above, still more needs to be done to prompt students to hone their questions and define bodies of literature earlier, thus enhancing the quality of the final product. It is likewise clear from these evaluations that the course facilitates a spirit of intellectual community among students who newly recognize the overlaps of their interests, or who come to appreciate the different kinds of expertise their fellows have been accumulating. In addition, students often acknowledge that because the course is team-taught they benefit from exposure to faculty members with whom they had never interacted previously because of their individualized program of study in the major. Finally, the evaluations consistently convey that students find value in the independence our senior program overall provides them as they move into their Thesis projects.

Still, a review of the Senior Seminar course evaluations in the context of this departmental self-study brings to light three aspects of the evaluations that would make them better serve the purpose of assessing the department's success in meeting its goals. First, the question regarding students' views on the readings needs to be formulated more precisely – instead of simply asking students to “evaluate the readings assigned for the seminar,” this coming year we plan to ask each student, first, to “evaluate the ways in which the assigned readings helped you think about power in more complex and interesting ways”; and, second, to “tell us about the ways that reading any of these texts helped you develop your Senior Thesis.” Second, we plan to add a question asking each student: “Please evaluate the role of the Thesis Literature Review assignment and the Thesis Oral Presentation in preparing you to write your Thesis.” Third, we plan to revise the question on class discussions so that moves beyond the mechanics of the conversations (e.g., student discussion leaders and faculty discussion facilitation), and also asks students about whether, in their view, class discussions invited a broad range of student contributions regardless of students' previous areas of concentration in their individual programs of study, since this inclusivity is an important objective in the Seminar.

Evidence of our Department's success in meeting its goals, albeit of a less systematic nature, also comes from the consistently high level at which Politics faculty and students have received competitive awards by the College and other institutions either recognizing excellence in teaching (or the integration of teaching and scholarship) or supporting joint faculty-student research projects. On no fewer than fifteen occasions during 1997-2006, Politics Department faculty-student pairs have been awarded Whitman's Perry or Abshire

awards to support collaborative research projects. Our avid and successful pursuit of these opportunities has contributed in profound ways to our ability to guide students in the development of their individual academic interests through unparalleled experiences of close cooperation with faculty members. In addition, the College clearly considers Politics faculty to rank among the highest at this institution. Between 1999 and 2005, four of the seven annual recipients of the Robert Y. Fluno Award for Distinguished Teaching in Social Sciences and Education were members of the Politics Department. In 2006, a different Politics faculty member won the G. Thomas Edwards Faculty Award for Teaching and Scholarship. In 2005, a Politics Department member was named one of the College's Paul Garrett Fellows, recognizing excellence in teaching and scholarship. Whitman's Politics faculty members have also received awards for their outstanding work with students from sources outside the College, including the Mentoring Award from the Women & Politics Section of the American Political Science Association and a teaching award given by the Environmental Education Association of Washington (EEAW). Furthermore, although we recognize that the Accreditation Committee does not view faculty scholarship and participation in professional organizations, as such, as direct evidence of success in our teaching mission, all of us gain intellectual vitality and growth that infuses our teaching from this sort of work. We thus think it is important to point out that the members of our Department regularly publish books with the top academic presses, publish articles in leading peer-reviewed journals, and are engaged in both national and international professional organizations for scholars.

In addition, Politics Department students regularly are awarded prestigious fellowships for graduate study and special research projects. One 2005 graduate, who was Whitman's first Rhodes Scholar in a very long time, worked closely with Politics Department faculty in her Individually Planned Major in Political Philosophy. In just the past five years, Whitman Politics majors have also won the Truman Fellowship, a number of Watson Fellowships, even more Fulbright awards. Another Whitman Politics major, along with a student completing an Individually Planned Major in Peace and Conflict Studies involving extensive work with Politics faculty members, were awarded highly competitive places in the 2006 Public Policy and International Affairs Summer Institutes at Princeton University and University of California, Berkeley. Still other Politics majors recently have received the Bob and Eleanor Grant Trust Fellowship for Environmental Sciences and the Humanity in Action American Fellowship.

There have also been strong indications from important sources outside the College that our curricular innovations in the area of experiential and community-based learning are succeeding extremely well. A clear sign of the great accomplishments of the "Semester in the West" program is that the original grant that launched the program as a demonstration project is now going to be renewed, allowing the program to run a third time and possibly beyond that as well. Strong student demand for the program (two students apply for each available space on the Program) has convinced the College to make Semester in the West a regular part of the College curriculum. In 2004, the EEAW recognized the professor who runs the program as Outstanding Environmental Educator for his work in developing Semester in the West's unique curriculum. The experience of traveling and studying with a small group of students and professors has been a powerful one for students, many of whom have been inspired to pursue careers in environmental non-governmental organizations (NGO's) and in natural resource policy.

In addition, the landmark report on "The State of the State for Washington Latinos" authored by the students in our Fall 2006 research seminar on this topic was greeted with overwhelming enthusiasm by major public officials and Latino leaders in Washington State. Official representatives of Governor Christine Gregoire, numerous state lawmakers, Mexican American civil rights leaders, health care advocates, education specialists, the farm labor community, and immigrants rights organizations are among the many who have hailed the report as being of unprecedented value in presenting an integrated picture of the challenges and problems faced by the Latino minority population in this state. The students who wrote the report and the professor were also specially recognized for this achievement at the first annual Hispanic/Latino Legislative Day in the State Capitol in February 2006, at which they were the only college or university contingent. Locally, in turn, Latino leaders and other professionals uniformly and enthusiastically support the continued growth of this campus-

community partnership in further iterations of the course, which is being offered again in 2007.

The College, finally, has recently recognized the special value of the Whitman BorderLinks Trip by allocated new and substantial funds to the students who are going on this excursion in Spring 2006 for Fall 2006 programming related to their experiences with BorderLinks. Along with the standard public presentations expected of students in the U.S-Mexico border program, this year's participants have also committed to planning, organizing, and leading a two-day experiential education program on immigration politics in Eastern Washington this fall for incoming first-year students. We expect that this will be well received by the College, which has expressed a strong interest in engaging incoming students with the broader community.

With regard to meeting our goal of contributing in vital ways to the diversity emphasis of the College, we believe we have good reason to consider our department exceptional among the various departments at Whitman. Not only do we offer a great many courses that fulfill the "Alternative Voices" distribution requirements (14 courses, or more than any other department except for History) – in addition, virtually every course in the department is sharply attentive to questions of difference, power, and justice.

Finally, in terms of resources for our upcoming systematic review of our program's success, we have the good fortune that Timothy Kaufman-Osborn was recently elected to the Executive Council of the American Political Science Association. In that capacity, he has been appointed to a committee devoted to examining the undergraduate political science major in the United States. Tim's work on this committee will help ensure that our review of our program will be attuned to national developments on many of the same issues we face.

In conclusion, we want to address just briefly two additional issues. First, we have been asked to assess the quality and adequacy of the infrastructure support for our major. In general, we find our physical spaces, library resources, and technology support to be very satisfying. We are actively seeking, however, greater and qualitatively new commitments from the College both to community-based learning and to Global Studies, commitments that would be expressed both through the hiring of additional support staff and through the funding of new physical spaces and program resources to cultivate these exciting new educational prospects.

Second, we realize that we stand in need of more systematic contact with our department's graduates so that we can gain a better idea of the kinds of careers to which these former students are being drawn. With this in mind, we have inaugurated a new annual reception for Politics alumni and are developing a plan for keeping data on the people who come and the fields and employers where they work. This will help the Department not only by giving us additional information with which to assess our success in meeting our goals but also by allowing us to grow a network of contacts in the world beyond Whitman that will doubtless be of great benefit to future students. An initial appraisal of (incomplete) information from the College's Alumni Relations office about the careers and graduate programs entered into by Politics majors, however, shows that sizeable numbers of our alumni have launched successful careers in the following fields: law (garnering J.D. degrees from Harvard University, Georgetown University, and George Washington University, among other institutions); political campaigns and public officials' staff offices (including US Senators, the US Vice-President's office, and state office-holders); government agencies (including the state Department of Biology and Wildlife, the US Bureau of the Census, and various local government bodies); public service (through the Peace Corps, AmeriCorps, and labor union organizing); business (at firms including Goldman Sachs, Merrill Lynch, Apple Computers, Deloitte Consulting, and Washington Mutual); media communications (at organizations including the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, Colorado Public Radio, and the Boston Globe); and K-12 education (mainly as teachers). In addition, several graduates in recent years have gone on to graduate school in the top Ph.D. and/or MA programs in political science or public policy (including Yale University, Cornell University, Columbia University, University of Michigan, Johns Hopkins University/SAIS, the London School of Economics, Duke University, and University of Minnesota).

Accreditation Self-Study
Department of Psychology

Section 1: Purpose and Outcomes

The goals of the Psychology Department are as follows:

1. Promote students' acquisition of psychological knowledge, including major theoretical perspectives, basic principles, and concepts as well as their applications; conventions, vocabulary, and methods.
2. Provide opportunities to experience psychology in different contexts, including participation in required lab courses and thesis research, as well as through field work, small group projects, and discussion-based seminars.
3. Promote the acquisition of intellectual skills and self-knowledge, including quantitative analysis, writing, speaking, as well as personal growth and insight.
4. Encourage interdisciplinary perspectives, which promote students' understanding of how psychology is both similar to and different from the discipline's "nearest neighbors": anthropology, biology, philosophy, and sociology.

These goals are broadly consistent with APA's 2002 Report on Undergraduate Psychology Major Learning Goals and Outcomes, which lists 10 suggested goals and related learning outcomes for the undergraduate psychology major. For instance, our goal #3 above encompasses APA goal #2 (understand and apply research methods) #3 (respect and use critical thinking skills), #7 (communicate effectively), and #9 (personal development). Although our goal #4 (encourage interdisciplinary perspectives) is not identified as a goal in the APA document and represents a department-specific objective, the remainder of our goals may well be treated as abbreviated versions of those outlined in the APA report.

Our department emphasizes psychology as a basic and applied science. The discipline is taught from a basic science standpoint inasmuch as students learn to answer questions about behavior and mental life via behavioral research methods, analyze data quantitatively and qualitatively, and weigh evidence against various theoretical perspectives. The discipline is taught from an applied science perspective inasmuch as students learn how scientific results are extended to address real-world problems or to improve the quality of the human condition. By presenting psychology as a basic and applied science, we promote a method of inquiry into human nature that fosters skepticism, analytical reasoning, ethical decision making, and intellectual creativity. Moreover, by teaching psychology from this perspective, we promote capacities to analyze, interpret, criticize, communicate, and engage — all of which are abilities described in Whitman College's mission statement. Specifically, students who study psychology learn to analyze and interpret behavior through statistical analysis and inference, and through critical reflection of ideas in papers, theses, and class discussions; they acquire abilities to criticize by approaching new ideas with amiable skepticism, by participating in class debates, and by comparing and contrasting different philosophical and theoretical perspectives against one another; they communicate frequently in multiple oral and written assignments and in class discussions; and they engage the science of psychology through hands-on lab courses, research assistantships, and discussion-based seminars; through the creation and execution of a year-long senior thesis, and through internships in local community organizations.

Section 2: Description of Department

Major and Minor Programs/General Education & Distribution Courses

The Psychology Department offers a major program of study that culminates in the Bachelor of Arts degree when combined with a program of general education. A student who wishes to major in psychology must complete at least 36 psychology credits which must include Introductory Psychology, Psychological Statistics, Research Methods in Psychology, Contemporary and Historical Issues in Psychology, and two semesters of

Senior Thesis. In addition, students must take at least one seminar course in which discussion is emphasized (currently, any psychology course numbered 300-349) and at least one laboratory course that emphasizes hands-on or real-world learning of psychological concepts (currently, any psychology course numbered 350-399, or PSYC 460). Finally, in addition to these 36 credits, students must take at least three credits in anthropology or sociology, three credits in biology, and three credits in philosophy. Students must also complete a comprehensive written examination in their senior year and must pass an oral defense of their thesis.

The Psychology Department also offers a minor program of study that students may declare at the time of graduation. A student who wishes to minor in psychology must complete 18 psychology credits. These credits must include Introductory Psychology, Psychological Statistics, and at least one psychology course numbered 300 or higher.

Our curriculum also contributes to the general liberal arts educational program at Whitman College. For instance:

- We offer multiple sections of Introductory Psychology each semester, which provides a general survey of the discipline to large numbers of Whitman students. Introductory Psychology is the most popular course at Whitman College. For instance, 51% of the graduating class of 2006 took Introductory Psychology.
- Any course in psychology can be applied toward the social science component of a student's general liberal arts education at Whitman.
- Several courses (Physiology of Behavior; Psychological Statistics; Psychology of Women and Gender, Cross-Cultural Psychology) can contribute toward distribution requirements at Whitman College. For instance, Physiology of Behavior contributes to the Science distribution area, Psychological Statistics contributes toward the Quantitative Analysis requirement, and Psychology of Women and Gender, Cross-Cultural Psychology, and Social Stigma contribute to the Alternative Voices requirement.
- Our faculty is committed to interdisciplinary relationships with other departments. In addition to requiring several courses in psychology's neighboring disciplines, psychology faculty have team-taught courses with faculty from other departments and have cross-listed these classes (e.g., Social Psychology is cross-listed with Sociology and is team-taught with a Sociology faculty member; similarly, Philosophy and Psychology of Language is cross-listed with Philosophy and is also team-taught with a member of the Philosophy faculty).
- Until recently (2004), psychology contributed one faculty member each year to teach a section of Antiquity and Modernity ("Core"), which is required of all first-year students as a key component of their general studies. A department faculty retirement, together with recent talks about restructuring the nature of Core, led to the hiatus in our contribution.

Faculty

The faculty of psychology consists of five tenure-track faculty that make up the core of the department, all of whom hold the Ph.D. in psychology. Of these five faculty, three are tenured Associate Professors and two are Assistant Professors. One tenured professor has an endowed chair in cognitive science. In addition, the Director of Counseling contributes regularly and actively each year as an Adjunct Associate Professor, and one additional member of the College staff (Assistant to the President), has served as Visiting Instructor by offering one of our required courses (Research Methods) several times within the past five years.

While a five-person department cannot hope to represent fully the scope or diversity of the discipline, our faculty has several distinct specialty areas that represent some of the discipline's major subdivisions. For

instance, we have faculty with specializations in animal learning, aging, dynamic systems theory and modeling, infant cognitive and motor development, human memory, neuroscience, social psychology, social cognition, counseling and multicultural psychology. A strong cognitive thread exists within our faculty, as three faculty members have either been trained specifically in cognitive psychology, or incorporate ideas from cognitive psychology in their research. Less well-represented areas include applied and clinical areas. We continue to engage in dialogues about how to better represent these underemphasized areas in our department.

Melissa Clearfield, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor. Specialties: Infant cognitive, perceptual and motor development, Dynamic Systems theory and Dynamic Field models.

Walter T. Herbranson, Ph.D.

Associate Professor. Specialties: Comparative cognition and learning, physiological psychology.

Richard N. Jacks, Ph.D.

Director of Counseling and Associate Professor.

Matthew W. Prull, Ph.D.

Associate Professor and Department Chair. Specialties: cognitive psychology, aging, and neuropsychology.

S. Brooke Vick, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor. Specialties: social psychology, prejudice, stigma, self-identity, stress and coping.

Deborah Wiese, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor. Specialties: Counseling and clinical psychology, multicultural psychology.

Facilities

The Psychology Department is housed throughout much of the third floor of Maxey Hall. Faculty work in individual offices, teach in the assorted classroom spaces, and conduct research in various laboratory spaces.

Of the classrooms, three are large spaces (Maxey 303, 310, and 312); two of which are equipped with dedicated multimedia hardware (computer, DVD player, VCR, notevision projector, etc.). These classrooms are often used for large introductory courses (Introductory Psychology, Psychological Statistics, etc.). There is also one large seminar room (Maxey 302), and one demonstration lab (Maxey 317). The former is used for large courses that lend themselves to discussion (e.g., Psychology of Women and Gender), the latter is used for various lab courses in the department as well as for thesis projects that involve animal subjects. There is one small seminar room (Maxey 332) that is used for seminar courses, faculty meetings, and oral examinations. Finally, there is the Deborah DuNann Winter Peace Room (Maxey 330), a large space that is used for courses that involve group dynamics, role playing, and/or experiential learning (e.g., Applied Psychology).

The Psychology Department also contains four research labs as well as an animal housing unit. The Cognitive Aging lab is housed in Maxey 304, 305, and 306; these consist of small testing rooms. The Infant Learning and Development lab is housed in Maxey 329, a large research space. The Comparative Cognition lab is housed in Maxey 309 and Maxey 317, with Maxey 316 serving as the animal housing unit and containing two rooms for colonies of pigeons and rats, as well as a washroom and other maintenance/storage spaces. The Cross-Cultural Counseling lab consists of a small testing room space located in Maxey 307. A new social psychology lab is currently being constructed in three rooms (Maxey 321, 322, and 323). Two remaining rooms are designated for general storage (Maxey 318), and multimedia storage (Maxey 308).

These facilities generally serve the department's needs well, although the College intends to reconfigure the third-floor lab spaces to better suit the needs of the new faculty. We anticipate that a reconfiguration will begin within the next 2-3 years.

Section Three: Significant Changes in the Past 10 Years

Faculty

The most obvious change in the department since the 1997 accreditation is in our faculty. In 1997 there were four tenure-track faculty members: Jay Eacker, Jack Metzger, Steve Rubin, and Deborah DuNann Winter. All of these faculty have since retired. Thus, within eight years (1999-2006) the Psychology Department replaced its entire faculty.

The history of the new hires is as follows: A fifth faculty position was created in 1999 and was filled by Matthew Prull. Wally Herbranson was hired in 2000, Melissa Clearfield was hired in 2001, Deborah Wiese was hired in 2005, and Brooke Vick was hired in 2006. The cultural and ethnic diversity of our faculty has changed significantly with these recent hires, and the gender balance in our faculty has shifted considerably as well (three tenure-track faculty are now women and two are men). The increased diversity in our faculty appears propitious because it enables opportunities to teach psychology from a greater number of viewpoints and perspectives. The shift in our gender makeup is also an advantage because about 70-80% of our majors are women.

Curriculum

Several courses have been added to the psychology curriculum in the past 10 years while many others have been dropped. The changes in course offerings largely reflect the changing expertise and interests of the new faculty. New courses in topics such as comparative psychology, cross-cultural psychology, language, aging, memory, and gender are now offered regularly. Older courses have either been dropped as professors have retired, or the courses have “morphed” when a new professor took over a particular course from a retiring professor (e.g., Applied and Experimental Analysis of Behavior [affectionately known as ‘rat lab’] is now Psychology of Learning; Practicum/Field Learning Experience is now subsumed within Applied Psychology and Practicum).

We have also instituted general changes in our curriculum beyond specific course offerings, as described below. These general changes were made to ensure a level of uniformity in the major, as well as to address our goals better. Previously, our required introductory class and our senior capstone class addressed goal #1 (knowledge of content area), our required statistics and methods courses addressed goal #3 (acquiring skills), and our external requirements in biology, sociology, etc., addressed goal #4 (interdisciplinary perspectives). However, we believed the curriculum could have been structured better to meet goal #2 (experiencing psychology in different contexts) so the following changes were instituted:

Lab Courses

Beginning with the 2002-03 academic year, we required each student to take at least one laboratory course, in which hands-on or real-world learning of psychological principles takes place on a separate lab day or in scheduled work hours in community settings. We define the lab environment broadly — it can be a separate classroom (as in Physiological Psychology), a faculty member’s research lab (Lab in Child Development), or a placement in a community organization (as in Applied Psychology and Practicum). Lab courses are typically capped at 12-15 students.

We instituted this requirement because a lab course enables students to learn psychological concepts first-hand by seeing or creating behavior that represents those concepts.

Seminar Courses and Group Processes in Learning.

Also in 2003, we required students to take at least one seminar course. Seminar courses are generally less structured and more informal relative to introductory or lecture-format courses, and these courses are designed to promote learning through discussions of readings (often primary sources such as journal articles). Seminars tend to involve advanced topics in psychology, appropriate for juniors and seniors, although freshmen and sophomores are usually not prevented from taking seminars. Students are expected to engage in and

evaluate ideas and concepts, and cannot excel in the course by remaining passive during class sessions. Current seminar courses include Seminar in Psychology of Aging, Seminar in Cross-Cultural Psychology, Comparative and Evolutionary Psychology, Social Stigma, and Theories of Cognition and Development. As with lab courses, seminars are typically capped at 12-15 students.

We believe seminars provide students with a way of learning and responding to multiple individual viewpoints or ideas that may not be provided in a lecture-style format. Thus, the seminar requirement also addresses goal #2.

In a related manner, several faculty have initiated problem-based learning (PBL) in their classes. In PBL, students learn principles and concepts of psychology by solving problems (learning-by-doing) rather than primarily by listening and taking notes. One of the most effective techniques in PBL is Team-Based Learning, where students solve problems in the field in teams, rather than as individuals. The advantage to teams is that they are permanent, and, through the grading structure, create both individual and team accountability. This structure provides students with the opportunity for significant learning experiences, where students learn foundational knowledge, applications, and integration, while at the same time learning to see the value of the course material for themselves and others, learning to work cooperatively with others, and learning to learn.

We have also experienced several additional changes in our department that relate to student learning:

Research Labs.

Students have become increasingly involved in research by serving as research assistants in various faculty research labs. These assistantships allow select students to learn about psychology hands-on (and thus addresses goal #2). Students learn to conceptualize research problems, design and execute experiments, and analyze data. They do so through competitive faculty-student research awards (Perry and Abshire awards) or through enrollment in Research Experience, a course for which they can receive lab class credit. The increased emphasis on getting students involved in research labs reflects the current institutional zeitgeist emphasizing Whitman faculty as teacher-scholars. Research skills are emphasized in the graduate programs that our recently-hired faculty have attended, and the College as a whole has increasingly emphasized research as critical for promotion and tenure.

Increased Emphasis on Technology in Learning and Student Assessment.

As the technological sophistication of our faculty and students has risen, so have our expectations of students' use of that technology in their learning. Since the last accreditation, students must now use computer programs (SPSS) for statistics and research methods courses, must use on-line databases (PsycINFO) to access the psychological literature, and are required to use software (PowerPoint) to supplement their oral presentations of their research work. We teach students how to use each of these software packages throughout our courses. Moreover, students can take advantage of individual faculty expertise of computing tools for qualitative research (Nvivo), online survey construction and execution (SurveyMonkey) and creating professional-quality posters for conferences (Multimedia Lab in Hunter Conservatory).

Enrollments

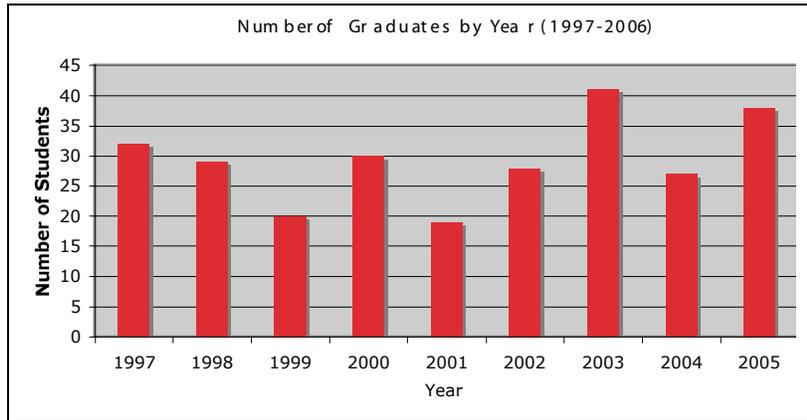
Psychology is one of the most popular majors at Whitman College, a situation that is both satisfying and a source of concern. It is satisfying to know that we teach and conduct research in a subject that attracts large numbers of students, but the stretching of resources, particularly in faculty time, can be excessive.

Enrollment trends over the past 10 years are shown in the first two graphs on page 52. As can be seen, the past 10 years have shown a slight dip in the number of graduates followed by a modest recent rise. The dip likely represents the new faculty addition in 1999 that appears to have eased the demand for a couple years, but the ratio of students to tenure-track faculty has increased to the same level as before the new position was added.

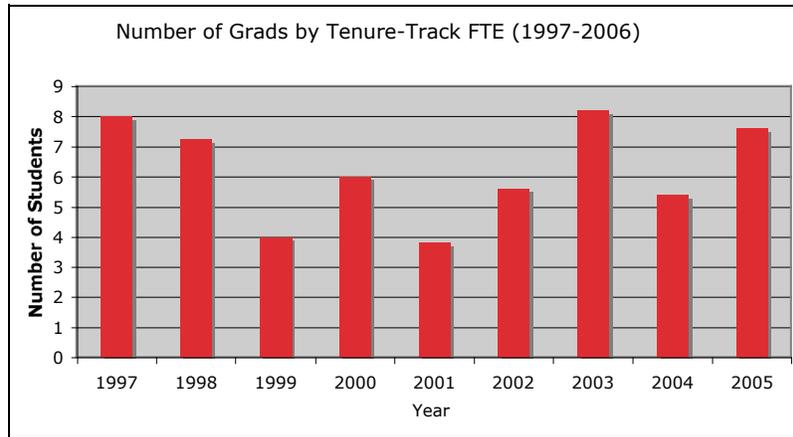
The third and fourth graphs on pages 52 and 53 provide comparisons with other departments and programs

at the College. Each graph depicts the average number of graduates per tenure-track position, separated into two five-year intervals (1996-2000, and 2001-2006). In the first graph, Psychology was second college-wide in number of graduates per FTE, and in the second graph Psychology was tied with Biology for third in number of graduates per FTE.

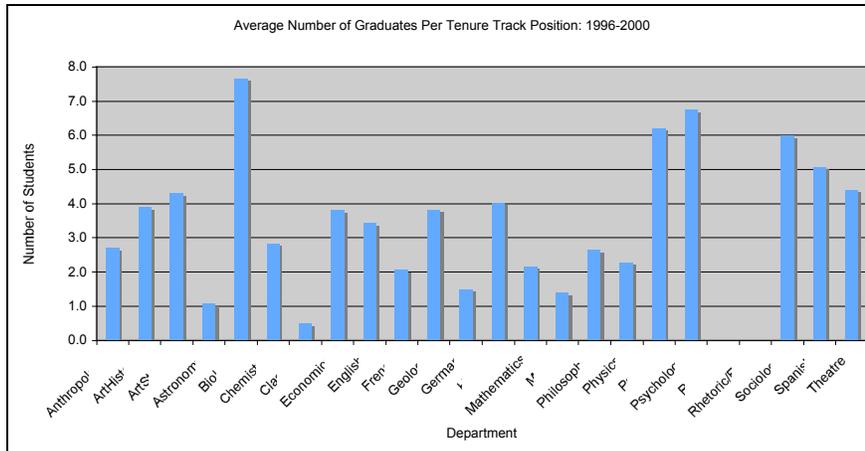
Again, this slight reduction is likely the result of the addition of the 5th tenure-track position in 1999.



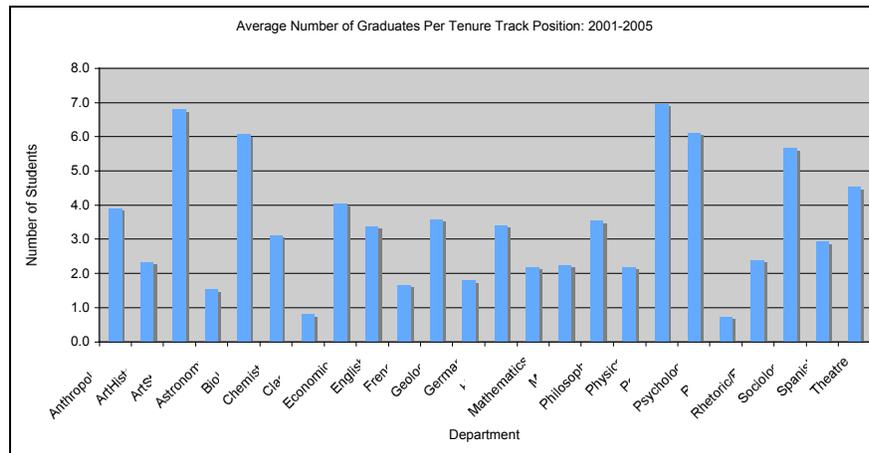
Graph 1



Graph 2



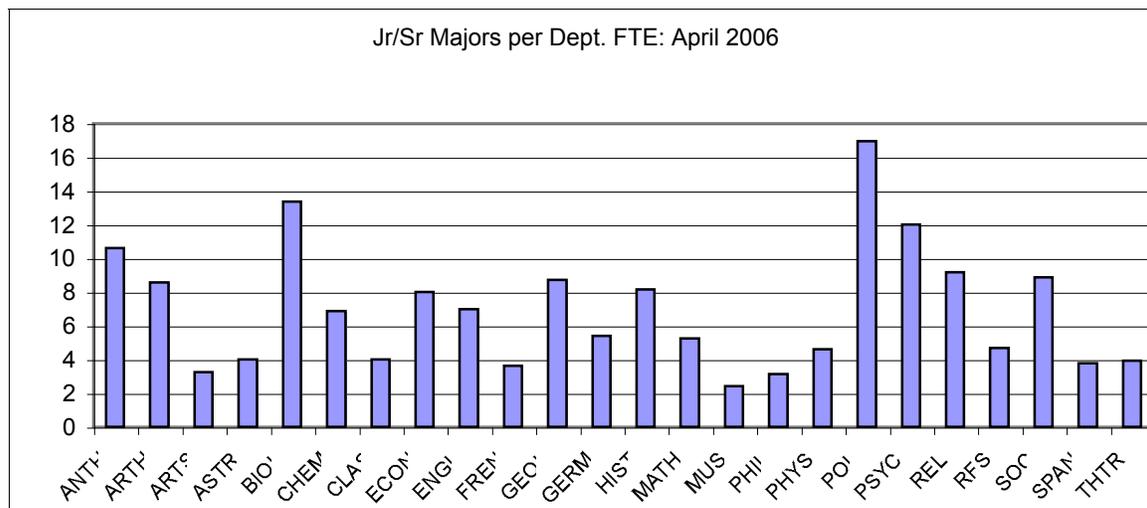
Graph 3



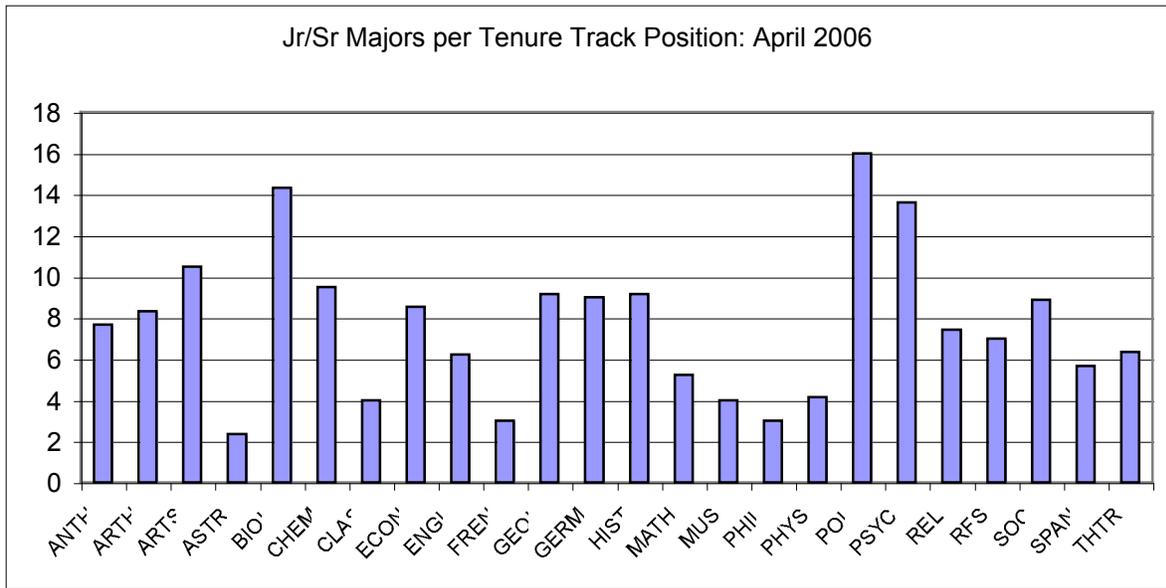
Graph 4

The fifth and sixth graphs, below and on page 54, present a current snapshot of the number of majors. These graphs depict last year's student-to-faculty ratios for Psychology, compared to all other departments, for 2006.

Both graphs indicate that Psychology had the third largest number of majors, behind Politics and Biology.

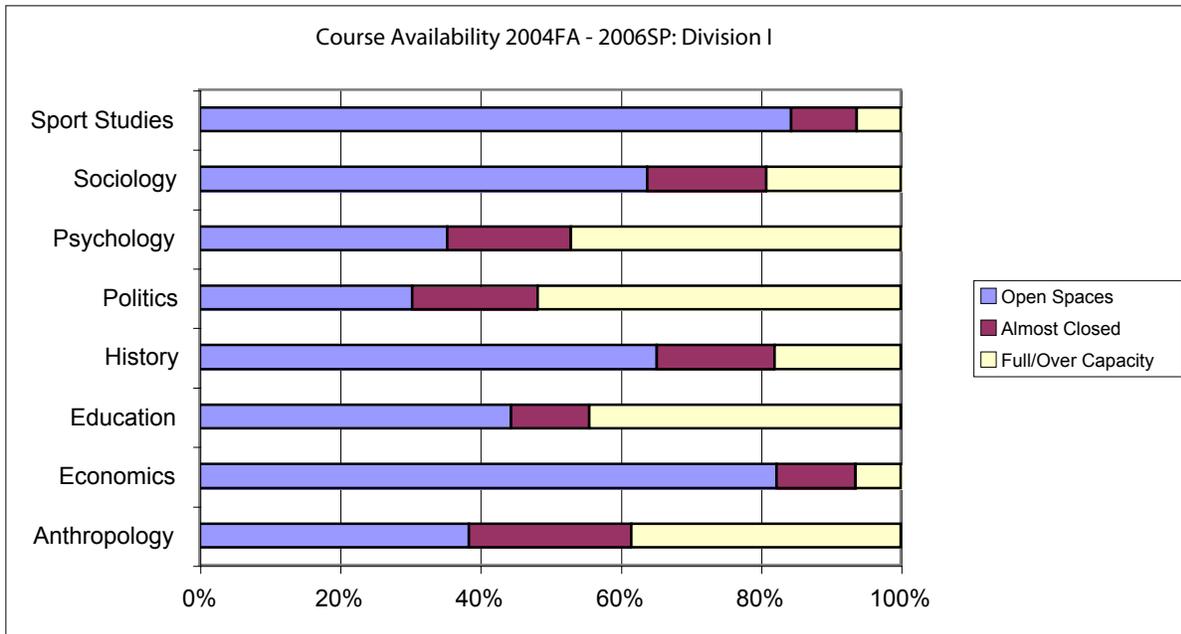


Graph 5



Graph 6

Finally, enrollment trends also convey the popularity of Psychology among students. As the graph below indicates, Psychology has recently been at the upper end of Division I departments for number of classes that are full or over capacity, even though we have allowed class size to reach 40 students in some cases. This fact also holds true if the comparison is made with Psychology and all departments and programs at the College.



Section 4: Analysis and Appraisal

Our assessment of the department's success is based on several sources. Two primary sources come from (a) standardized written exams that allow us to compare the performance of our students against others in a national sample, and (b) narrative reports that are required by each graduating senior.

Within the last 10 years, we have used the GRE Psychology subject test (1997-2000) and the Psychology Major Field Test (MFT; 2001-present), both of which are offered by ETS. Although individual students may elect to take the GRE Psychology test instead of the MFT, we switched our testing from the GRE to the MFT because GRE testing dates were more restrictive for students, the GRE was more expensive, and the GRE was designed primarily to indicate graduate school aptitude rather than to assess a curriculum of learning. The MFT appears to solve each of these problems.

Our students' knowledge of content is indicated in the percentile scores provided by these exams. Our yearly mean percentiles are as follows:

As can be seen in the following table, GRE score percentiles range from the upper 60s to the mid-70s, while MFT scores range from the 90th to the 95th percentile. The sudden upward shift in percentile rankings is likely attributable to a difference in the normative populations for each test – students who take the GREs are often graduate-school bound and thus contain many outstanding students. Students who take the MFT are not necessarily graduate-school bound and may not have prepared as vigorously (the MFT is not designed to be a “high-stakes” exam that determines graduate school entry).

Class	Exam	Average Score	Percentile
1996-97	GRE		68
1997-98	GRE		68
1998-99	GRE		76
1999-00	GRE		70
2000-01	GRE		69
2001-02	MFT	179.1	90
2002-03	MFT	184.9	95
2003-04	MFT	183.7	95
2004-05	MFT	179.6	90
2005-06	MFT	181.3	90

While standardized tests may provide us with a “quality check” for our department, standardized tests usually reveal little about what students make of their own learning — how they integrate knowledge across courses, what they think about their developing skills, and how the curriculum we provide meets or fails to meet their hopes for a major. We assess this less quantifiable kind of knowledge using a Narrative Self Assessment assignment, a document that students must submit in the spring of their graduating year (see Appendix A in the Accreditation Exhibit Room). This document is usually written as an open, unsigned letter to the department. Even though students are typically burdened by end-of-year assignments (and, often, by thoughts of what to do with one’s life after graduating), we have found these assessments impressively reflective and valuable for our department to assess how we are doing, as well as for developing plans for improvement.

A third source of evidence of quality comes from the review of proposals to give papers or posters at various psychology conferences. Proposals are reviewed by a conference committee for quality and, if accepted, students are obligated to present their work at the conference. Most students get accepted (approximately 80-90%). This result suggests that the research work that our students complete is regarded favorably by the larger psychological community. We also note that the number of authored and co-authored presentations at some conferences (Western Psychological Association, or WPA) is high relative to a variety of local institutions (see Appendix B in the Accreditation Exhibit Room). We have had great success at attracting students to present at these conferences. Indeed, between 2001 and 2004 (the time period for which we have data), Whitman students and faculty presented 42 posters at WPA. No other institution in the table, including University of Washington, approaches that value.

A fourth source of evidence comes from the number of funded research proposals and, related, the number of student co-authors on conference papers and publications. The number of Abshire and Perry awards that have

been given to student-faculty research teams has increased substantially since the wave of new hires began in 1999. These projects often turn into published research articles, and several department members have now included students as co-authors on their work.

Finally, a fifth source of evidence comes from community assessment of students in field work. Students are evaluated twice each semester by on-site supervisors at the settings where they do their practicum. These evaluations provide information on how prepared students are for their placements, the quality of their engagement in the placement, and their growth in applying aspects of psychology in the field. The faculty member in charge of placements additionally meets with site supervisors to ensure a good experience for both students and community members.

Quality of Teaching & Advising

The quality of our teaching is assessed primarily through student evaluations each semester, but also occasionally by classroom visits by colleagues when professors undergo contract renewal processes. Often, the visiting colleague will hold a one-on-one conversation before and/or after the classroom visit to gain pre-visit information and to provide input and evaluation.

The quality of our advising has been more difficult to assess. We advise students in two ways: Academic advising and senior thesis advising. On the narrative assessment, students rarely provide feedback on the quality of their academic advising. However, the narrative assessments routinely provide us with feedback about the quality of our thesis advising. One recurrent theme in these assessments is that the nature of advising differs considerably from advisor to advisor. Some advisors, for instance, provide a great deal of written commentary on each thesis draft, others appear to provide very little. Some advisors help students develop goals each week, month, and/or semester, others adopt more of a hands-off approach and leave most of the planning up to the student. The narrative assessments convey a desire to increase thesis advising uniformity and consistency. Although the department meets weekly to discuss advising experiences and to solve problems when they arise, we can do a better job at training new faculty and increasing consistency. One way in which we could do that is to observe how different faculty within the department provide feedback to thesis drafts. Another way is to pair new faculty with experienced faculty in a mentor-mentee type of relationship.

However, we believe variability in thesis advising is likely a product of a rapidly changing faculty, and if so, uniformity and consistency will naturally increase with time. New tenure-track faculty and one-year appointments are still in the process of learning to advise effectively, and we have had a great many new faces in the department within the past seven years as well as some complaints about their effectiveness as thesis advisors. Because the issue of consistency is partially addressed by hiring new people and letting time pass, the department's thesis advising will likely improve and become more consistent as the next generation of psychology faculty settle in.

Future Plans

In 1999, the Psychology Department underwent an external review, or "preview," in which a number of recommendations were made for the coming decade. A good deal of that preview focused on strategies for hiring the next generation of psychology faculty members, and several (but not all) of the recommendations made by the external committee were followed (one recommendation was to hire an applied psychologist, which we did not do). Now that the flurry of faculty searches has ended for the foreseeable future, and now that we have revised our curriculum, we appear to be arriving at a "settling" state in our department. We imagine we will spend the next couple of years letting the dust settle and waiting to what the immediate future brings.

In the short long-term, however, there are several issues that we face, many of which have emerged as common themes in our narrative reports each year:

1. **Reappraise Requirements.**

Psychology has numerous course requirements, perhaps more so than any other major in the College. Does this provide too little flexibility for our students to pursue their own interests, or for faculty to teach content courses within their own realms of expertise? Does the large number of classes prevent students from benefiting from a study-abroad experience, or force many students to take summer classes at other institutions?

2. **Do Our External Requirements in Anthropology/Sociology, Biology, and Philosophy Satisfactorily Meet Our Goal of Interdisciplinary Learning?**

Currently, students have the option of taking any class from each of these disciplines, but if a student takes a biology class in nutrition, for example, it is difficult (though perhaps not impossible) to see how such a class meshes with what that student learns in a Psychology major. Some external requirements are more befitting for a psychology major than others.

3. **Is Too Much Emphasis Placed on Basic Research, Too Little Emphasis on Applied Issues?**

The number of research labs focusing on basic science has increased substantially in the department within the past 10 years, but we are concerned that the recent emphasis on the scientific approach to psychology has diminished the practice and applied sides of psychology. Having both sides represented in our department is important, in part because students often major in psychology due to an interest in clinical/counseling psychology — traditionally an applied aspect of the discipline. Our 1999 preview recommended that we work on boosting the applied fields of psychology, and that recommendation currently remains unfulfilled.

Appendices are available in the Accreditation Exhibit Room.

Accreditation Self-Study
Race and Ethnic Studies Program

Goals of the Program

The Race and Ethnic Studies major and minor take an interdisciplinary approach to the study of Race and Ethnicity – what do these categories of difference mean? How have they been defined, constructed, and applied in different socio-historic contexts? How do they intersect or overlap with other axes of difference (e.g. gender, class, nation, religion)? Exploring these questions with analytical tools and approaches developed in a range of academic disciplines, this major leads to a critical examination of many historical and contemporary social issues that arise from the institutionalization of racial and ethnic difference.

Rather than focusing on any one national or regional context, or on any particular ethnic or racial category, the Race and Ethnic Studies major is designed both as a flexible program accommodating concentration in, for example, African American Studies or Ethnicity in East Asia or Race and Nationalism, and as a more comprehensive and comparative exploration in conceptual, analytic, and theoretical terms. Partly because race and ethnicity as categories of difference are so often conflated with other categories – nation, class, religion, etc. – the program is intended not to reify or reinscribe any one situated understanding of power and difference, but to encourage students to explore local meanings and intersections along with broader theoretical claims.

Amidst a campus-wide discussion of “diversity” and preparation for a “multicultural world,” the addition of a major and minor in Race and Ethnic Studies provides interested students and faculty with a locus of intellectual exploration of one of the central themes of such conversations.

Description of the Program

The Race and Ethnic Studies Major

The 36-credit major requires the student to complete two foundational courses aimed at establishing central theoretical, conceptual, and historical themes related to the study of race and ethnicity in multiple contexts. In the elective portion of the major, particular contexts of study will vary from student to student. The Race and Ethnic Studies major asks the student to choose a focus of study (a concentration) while acquiring exposure to several academic disciplines. Then, in the senior year, students bring their varied backgrounds together in a senior seminar, allowing joint exploration of case studies and individual work toward the thesis to be completed during spring semester. The major also requires exposure to a language other than the student’s own.

Foundations: The student majoring in Race and Ethnic Studies takes General Studies 245, Critical and Alternative Voices, a course that approaches categories of difference from multiple perspectives (not only those of race and ethnicity) and in both domestic and global contexts. The student also takes one discipline-based course centered on racial and ethnic analysis in which analysis of categories of racial or ethnic difference is central: the current list includes Sociology 267 Race and Ethnic Group Relations; History 371 African American History; History 268 US Ethnic and Immigration History; Politics 259 Politics of Race, Ethnicity, and Religion; and Philosophy 225 Critical Race Theory.

Concentration: The concentration consists of three courses (typically 9-12 credits) allowing depth of study in a topic or region. The concentration also provides background for thesis research. The concentration must be proposed to and approved by the Race and Ethnic Studies Committee by the end of fall semester of the junior year. Examples of regional concentrations include: Race and Ethnicity in Latin America, Ethnicity and Race in Africa, US Race and Ethnic Studies, African American Studies, or Race and Ethnicity in South Asia. Examples of thematic or topical concentrations include: Ethnicity and Identity; Race and Gender; Literary Representations of Race and Ethnicity; Race and Class; Ethnicity and Nation; Race, Ethnicity, and Nature; Religion and Ethnicity. At least two of the three courses in the concentration must be taken at Whitman to insure availability of faculty support for the research area.

Electives: Most students will need three more courses to complete the major. These courses are chosen in

consultation with the adviser to complement the concentration, such that, in combination with foundational and concentration coursework, the student has worked in three academic disciplines overall. It is recommended that the student explore more than one geographic area. Overall, at least three of the student's courses must be at the 300- or 400- level.

Capstone: By the end of the junior year, the student proposes a thesis topic to the Race and Ethnic Studies Committee, so that a faculty thesis committee can be assembled by early fall. These committees consist of three faculty, one of whom serves as chair. Majors take a four-credit senior seminar in the fall (RaES 490), in which they discuss common readings and case studies and begin thesis research and planning. The final project for the class is a research proposal with bibliography, discussed and defended in a meeting during exam week with the thesis committee and the Race and Ethnic Studies committee. The student is then well prepared to complete the thesis (2 credits) in the spring, under the supervision of the thesis chair and committee. The oral major examination, administered by the thesis committee, begins with a thesis defense and proceeds to a broader synthesis of the student's work in the major.

Language Requirement: The language requirement provides students with at least some direct exposure to the linguistic dimensions of difference. The major requires 12 credits of college-level language study in a language other than the student's first language. These credits may be earned at Whitman College, through transfer credit from accredited U.S. institutions of higher learning, or from a Whitman approved study abroad program. The 12 credits must be completed in no more than two languages; while more depth in one language is preferable, we want to encourage our majors to study abroad, and a third semester of languages such as Setswana or Arabic is not a feasible requirement.

The Race and Ethnic Studies Minor

The student completing a minor in Race and Ethnic Studies will take GenS 245 Critical and Alternative Voices, one additional foundation course (Soc 267 Race and Ethnic Group Relations; Hist 371 African American History; Hist 268 US Ethnic and Immigration History; Pol 259 Politics of Race, Ethnicity, and Religion; Phil 225 Critical Race Theory), and three elective courses chosen from the list of eligible courses.

Faculty and Staffing

Race and Ethnic Studies is an interdisciplinary program relying on faculty in several departments, including Anthropology, English, Foreign Languages, History, Music, Philosophy, Politics, Religion, Rhetoric and Film Studies, and Sociology. At present there are no dedicated positions or fractional FTEs dedicated to the program, but most of the students' coursework is classified departmentally, leaving one course per year (RaES 490) to be taught outside of a faculty member's departmental obligations (and possibly in fulfillment of a department's General Studies obligations). Thesis advising is presently handled, as it is in Asian Studies and Gender Studies, as an overload.

Oversight of the program is by steering committee with a chair who acts as program director. The committee spans Divisions I and II, and consists of a subset of the major advisers. We also maintain a list of affiliated faculty who are available for thesis committees. The Race and Ethnic Studies committee makes operating decisions, approves proposed concentrations, and ensures that each student has an appropriate faculty committee for the thesis and senior assessment – functioning more or less as a department, but also coordinating other faculty on behalf of our students. During this first year of the major the Race and Ethnic Studies committee has been in frequent discussion of issues arising in RaES 490 and in the approval process of concentrations for majors.

The Race and Ethnic Studies Committee for 2006-2007 includes Nina Lerman, History (director), Bruce Magnusson, Politics, Helen Kim, Sociology, Jean Carwile Masteller, English, Shampa Biswas, Politics (spring), and David Glenn, Music (spring; director for 2007-08). Advisers include the Race and Ethnic Studies committee members plus Robert Withycombe, Rhetoric and Film Studies, and Nicole Simek, French. There are some 15

or 20 affiliate faculty, and the Race and Ethnic Studies listserv, open to faculty and staff interested in discussing campus issues or receiving notice of related events, has some 70 subscribers. The listserv was particularly active in the fall of 2006 in discussions of how the campus might best respond to racially charged student debates and insults following the appearance at a campus party of two white students painted black with “tribal” markings.

Facilities

Additional library acquisitions will most likely be needed as students embark on research in the field. In general the facilities used and required will be those each department needs already. We have requested a separate library budget (following other interdisciplinary majors), which will allow acquisitions not directly tied to participating disciplines.

History and Background

The Race and Ethnic Studies major and minor were proposed to and passed by the faculty during the 2005-2006 academic year. This final version of the Race and Ethnic Studies major developed from the minor in American Ethnic Studies (now redundant and deleted from the catalog), and was the product of several years’ work. While early attempts at creating a major centered on the United States, conversations among faculty and reflections on the Individually Planned Majors (IPM’s) students had designed over the years made clear that a broader approach was appropriate on two levels: first, within the College, a broader and more flexible program would bring together both students and faculty with related interests, enriching the intellectual exchange on campus; and second, a comparative perspective on local, regional, or national constructions of racial and ethnic categories would offer students a better reflection of the current direction of scholarship in the fields contributing to such a major. It would also complement and contribute to faculty scholarship with racial and ethnic dimensions, as does the program in Gender Studies.

In designing the new major, we considered the steady stream of student interest leading some to design Independent Majors. We assumed that with a formal major as with the IPM’s, some students would be particularly interested in studying the US (as had the old minor); these students could do so, but would gain analytical sophistication by working in a more comparative framework, and by situating the US case among others in the senior seminar. Other students might complete the major with little or no coursework in US topics, concentrating on other regions and issues. At present, we expect the advising burden in the major to be relatively high, because each student will need guidance in developing her or his path through the program, but generally we expect to provide more effective advising under this structure than the crop of overlapping but distinct IPM’s could allow. We also expect that our collective experience in the next several years will lead to refinements in the structure and requirements of the major as we continue to engage students and each other in interdisciplinary conversation. For example, we have currently designed a major with multiple entry points rather than a single introductory course, more like BBMB in this sense than like Asian Studies or Gender Studies, but it is possible we will decide that an introductory course (a hypothetical RaES 100) would serve students better than the more situated paths we now anticipate. We have already made a series of small changes to the catalog copy, adding specificity or clarity where they have been shown, by experience rather than prediction, to have been missing.

Analysis and Appraisal

We are limited in the analysis and appraisal we can offer for a major preparing to graduate its first two seniors this spring. Both of these seniors requested to add Race and Ethnic Studies as a double major, one with History and one with Gender Studies, during the spring of their junior year when the major was approved. They have served admirably as pioneers and “guinea pigs,” asking excellent questions and challenging us to define our intentions as we all improvised a bit to construct their senior year with little advance warning. At present we expect four students in next year’s senior seminar and have two or three sophomores known to be declaring this year. We anticipate a small but steady group of majors and a larger group of minors, and we expect that the existence of the major and minor in the curriculum and in the campus conversation about multiculturalism

and globalization will stimulate greater attention to these categories of analysis among students in the existing disciplinary majors as well.

Since the major will be in its second year next year, the committee and advisers will continue periodic meetings to assess both the procedures and requirements of the major. What constitutes the senior seminar? How well does the combination of foundations, concentrations, and electives work in practice? Is the faculty advising effective in planning the major and producing an appropriate and rigorous capstone experience and thesis project? These are questions, among others, that will be addressed at least yearly until the major and minor become established.

Accreditation Self-Study
Department of Sociology

Departmental Goals

In teaching and mentoring students, the faculty members of the Whitman College Department of Sociology strive to achieve a total of ten goals. Seven of these objectives are taken more-or-less directly from a document published by our major professional organization, The American Sociological Association – Kathleen McKinney et al.'s *Liberal Learning and the Sociology Major Updated* (2004).

According to this document, all Sociology majors should demonstrate understanding of the following:

1. The discipline of Sociology and its role in contributing to our understanding of social reality, such that the student will be able to: (a) describe how Sociology differs from and is similar to other social sciences and to give examples of these differences; (b) describe how Sociology contributes to a liberal arts understanding of social reality; and (c) apply the sociological imagination, sociological principles, and concepts to his/her own life.
2. The role of theory in Sociology, such that the student will be able to: (a) define theory and describe its role in building sociological knowledge; (b) compare and contrast basic theoretical orientations; (c) show how theories reflect the historical context of the times and cultures in which they were developed; and (d) describe and apply some basic theories or theoretical orientations in at least one area of social reality.
3. The role of evidence and qualitative and quantitative methods in Sociology, such that the student will be able to: (a) identify basic methodological approaches and describe the general role of methods in building sociological knowledge; (b) compare and contrast the basic methodological approaches for gathering data; (c) design a research study in an area of choice and explain why various decisions were made; and (d) critically assess a published research report and explain how the student could have been improved.
4. The technical skills involved in retrieving information and data from the Internet and using computers appropriately for data analysis. The major should also be able to do (social) scientific technical writing that accurately conveys data findings and to show an understanding and application of principles of ethical practice as a sociologist.
5. Basic concepts in Sociology and their fundamental theoretical interrelations, such that the student will be able to define, give examples, and demonstrate the relevance of culture; social change; socialization; stratification; social structure; institutions; and differentiations by race/ethnicity, gender, age, and class. Students majoring in Environmental Studies – Sociology apply the aforementioned concepts to the causes and consequences of environmental problems (Department of Sociology wording).
6. The internal diversity of American society and its place in the international context, such that the student will be able to describe: (a) the significance of variations by race, class, gender, and age; and (b) will know how to appropriately generalize or resist generalizations across groups.
7. To think critically, such that the student will be able to: (a) move easily from recall analysis and application to synthesis and evaluation; (b) identify underlying assumptions in particular theoretical orientations or arguments; (c) identify underlying assumptions in particular methodological approaches to an issue; (d) show how patterns of thought and knowledge are directly influenced by political-economic social structures; (e) present opposing viewpoints and alternative hypotheses on various issues; and (f) engage in teamwork where many or different viewpoints are presented.

In addition to these larger disciplinary objectives, the Sociology Department also has several additional goals that articulate what we see as goals for learning in the environment of a liberal arts college more generally:

8. To provide students with basic skills in analytic and critical written expression, and effective verbal communication.
9. To provide Sociology majors with training in professional standards and opportunities for undergraduate participation which allows for their meaningful participation in professional events and activities of their discipline.
10. To encourage the development of attitudes and predispositions among students that contribute to effective and responsible leadership and citizenship, and to foster healthy maturation and self-growth more generally.

The Sociology Program Curriculum

The combination of a required introductory course, a course on research methods, a course on classical theory, and a capstone sequence is intended to provide each Sociology major with a solid and integrated preparation in Sociology both as a science and as a humanistic interpretive discipline. In 2005, the department was able to add increasing substantive focus on the general topic of social inequality with the allocation of a new tenure track position in race and ethnicity.

We believe that the range of elective courses that we offer represents the main substantive divisions within our discipline, as our curriculum offers a series of classes investigating (a) social inequality (*Class, Status, and Power; Gender and Society; Race and Ethnic Group Relations; Latinos in the U.S.; Asian Americans in Contemporary Society*), (b) social organization and institutions (*Sociology of the Family; Sociology of Criminal Justice; The Sociology of Mental Health and Mental Illness*), (c) relationships between individual and society (*Social Psychology; Sociology of Everyday Life; Sociology of the Body; Seminar in Cultural Sociology*), the role of, and problems within, the environment (*Environmental Sociology; Environmental Justice; Environmental Social Movements*), and (d) social change (*Social Problems, Social Movements, Technology and Society*). These courses allow individual students, guided by their major faculty adviser, to design a curriculum of study that reflects their personal interests and distinctiveness. In addition, supplementary courses allow students to expand their methodological skills (*Social Statistics*), enhance their theoretical abilities (*Contemporary Theory*), learn about adjacent disciplines (*Sociology and History of Rock 'n' Roll*), and become involved in community and the practical applications of our discipline (*Field Laboratory in Applied Sociology*).

In addition, the curriculum of the Sociology Department clearly attempts to reflect the objectives of Whitman as a liberal arts college. Thus, our curriculum consciously draws upon and emphasizes both the humanistic and scientific roots of modern society, and, relatedly, attempts to illuminate and articulate the connections of Sociology to the other academic disciplines. We do not believe that we should provide a narrow, specialized curriculum of the type often found in large research universities whose principal pedagogic objective is the preparation of students for graduate work. At the same time, however, the approach of the Whitman Sociology program is in no way inconsistent with that professional goal, and a number of our students do continue on to graduate school (even though the occupational destinations of our majors are highly varied).

The substantive emphasis of our curriculum is consistent with the focus discussed in McKinney et al.'s, *Liberal Learning and the Sociology Major Updated* (2004), to which we briefly referred earlier. It thus addresses such topics and issues as the analysis of social institutions; the relationships of diverse groups of people, both to each other, and to society more generally; the interaction between social structure and social change; the elements of modern culture; and the dynamic relationships between the social and natural worlds. In particular, our curriculum is marked by explicit foci on diversity, multiculturalism, and environmental issues.

More generally, the Sociology Department contributes directly, and in a variety of ways, to the overall academic program of Whitman College.

- First, each semester, we offer *Social Problems* and *Principles of Sociology*, both of which are designed largely for the general student.
- Second, because we do not have prerequisite requirements for most of our elective courses, we welcome students other than Sociology majors into these courses.
- Third, the Department is particularly committed to interdisciplinary relationships with other programs. Thus, for example, two of our courses count towards the newly established major in Race and Ethnic Studies, two count toward Gender Studies, and several are components in the Environmental Studies major. In addition, Psychology majors are required to take one Sociology course (or, alternatively, one Anthropology course). Moreover, a number of our courses are cross-listed with other departments, such as with Environmental Studies, Gender Studies, and Race and Ethnic Studies. Finally, we have actively encouraged the development of such cross-listed and team-taught courses as *Social Psychology* and *The Sociology and History of Rock 'n' Roll*.
- Fourth, each year we provide a faculty member to teach a section of the *Antiquity and Modernity* component of our General Studies Program. In fact, three of our tenure-line Departmental faculty members have taught in the First-Year Core Program at one time or another, and two have taught in the Critical and Alternative Voices component of the General Studies program.
- Fifth, the department values experiential education. As a result, many of our students take *Field Laboratory in Applied Sociology*, and a number of others participate in the college's domestic off-campus programs in Chicago, Philadelphia, and Washington, DC. In both of these educational settings, students are placed in internships for the semester, and they complement these hands-on activities by meeting as a class to apply sociological principles (available in assigned readings) to their experiences. Somewhat similarly, for all Environmental Studies-Sociology combined majors, an internship course is required.
- Finally, in addition to all of our courses being considered part of the Social Science component of our General Studies Distribution requirements, several of our classes count towards the Alternative Voices component, and our Social Statistics course meets the Quantitative requirement for Distribution.

The Sociology Major requires students to successfully complete a minimum of 36 credits. We require students to pass the introductory course (*Principles of Sociology*), the *Social Research Methods* course, a course on the *History of Sociological Theory*, and a senior capstone sequence consisting of a fall semester senior seminar (*Current Issues in Sociology*) and the senior thesis (*Directed Research*) – an independent scholarly project which can also be pursued at an honors level by qualified students. In addition, each student takes a series of elective courses to complete the 36 credits.

The Sociology Minor requires students to pass the introductory course (*Principles of Sociology*), the *Social Research Methods* course, and our course on the *History of Sociological Theory*, and to take additional courses to total at least 18 credits.

Environmental Studies–Sociology majors must take *Principles of Sociology*; *Social Research Methods*; *Environmental Sociology*; *History of Sociological Theory*; one course chosen from either *Human Communities*, or *Population*, or *Technology and Society*, or *Environmental Social Movements*, or *Sociology of Hazards and Disasters*, or *Environmental Justice*; one course selected from *Sociology of the Family*, *Complex Organizations*, or *Class, Status, and Power*; *Current Issues in Sociology*; and *Directed Research*, or *Honors Thesis*.

As indicated above, the Sociology Department requires all of its senior majors to enroll in and successfully complete *Current Issues in Sociology* (Sociology 490). In this course, together with critical readings of recent articles about key issues in Sociology, students write an extensive thesis proposal, meet past graduates who discuss the thesis process, complete resumes, learn about careers related to their academic majors, and study a literature about the process of thesis research and writing. The seminar also provides an opportunity for students to think critically about the discipline and some of the current debates going on within it. In addition, group solidarity tends to develop within the seminar, which then carries over to provide invaluable mutual

support during the writing of the thesis in the following semester.

As the second half of our senior capstone, the Sociology Department requires seniors to enroll in and successfully complete *Directed Research or Honors Thesis* (Sociology 492 or 498). In the spring semester, students form a thesis committee, made up of a minimum of three Sociology Department faculty members. During the semester, they conduct empirical and library research and meet regularly with their thesis chairperson and committee members, who provide suggestions, criticisms, and feedback. In the first part of the semester, each student makes a 35 minute professional presentation about his/her thesis research to the rest of the members of the seminar. In late March, students are encouraged to submit drafts of their senior thesis for faculty review and comments. Although an exact number of expected pages is not specified, a frequency distribution of senior theses reveals a mode in the 50-60 page vicinity, with a range of 20 to 150+. In the month of April, final drafts of theses are submitted and Oral Comprehensive Examinations based upon these theses are conducted.

Enrollments

Since 1990, the enrollment limit for Sociology 117, *Principles of Sociology*, has been set at 40 students. For all but five of the twenty-one semesters since fall 1996, the number of registered students in this course has met or exceeded this ceiling.

Sociology 110, *Social Problems*, has also had high enrollments during the past ten years. Thirteen of the last twenty-one semesters have had enrollments of at least 30 students. With the addition of a new tenure-track faculty member teaching this course during 2005-2006, the enrollment jumped from 19 in the fall to 52 in the spring.

The *Social Research Methods* class (Sociology 207), which is offered every fall, has maintained enrollments above 20 for all but one semester since 1996. Similarly, Sociology 367, *History of Sociological Theory*, which is offered every fall, has maintained enrollments above 20 for all but two semesters since 1996.

Appendix A, located in the Accreditation Exhibit Room contains charts illustrating the number of Environmental Studies graduates per year since 1996; the total numbers of students enrolled in all Sociology courses for the last ten semesters, and the number of students per full-time equivalent faculty; and the Sociology Department's enrollments relative to other departments within the Division of Social Sciences since 2001.

The high enrollments in our courses and the consistently large number of majors have led to the allocation of a new tenure-line faculty position in our department, effective in 2005-2006.

In discussing the relative robustness of our enrollments during the past ten years (and in the longer term), the possibility should perhaps be noted that, in the future, the number of Sociology majors may be affected by the recent approval of two new majors – Gender Studies and Race and Ethnic Studies – since the kinds of students who have traditionally been drawn to the Sociology major may similarly be attracted to focus their studies upon these more specific substantive areas of social relevance. It remains to be seen how this situation will play out in the future.

Faculty

Five tenure-track faculty members make up the core of the department. Two are tenured full professors, one is a recently tenured associate professor, and two are newly hired assistant professors who just completed their first year at Whitman. In addition, the Department has two other active members who function in important adjunct capacities: a visiting Assistant Professor of Sociology (who holds a Ph.D. in Sociology) who has taught full-time in our department for the past three years, and the Assistant Director of Institutional Research (who holds a Ph.D. in Sociology), who teaches one course for us (Social Statistics) every year. Both of these

individuals are also frequent members of students' senior thesis committees. There are three other members of the college's administration (one of them being our newly-hired president) who are professionally trained sociologists (two of whom have Ph.D.'s in Sociology, and one who has an M.A. in Sociology) who either have in the past or might in the future teach courses in our department, and who also serve as important resource people for our senior thesis program.

As has already been indicated in the discussion of our departmental curriculum, the Sociology Department is highly committed to issues of diversity, and this commitment has also been reflected in recent departmental searches and hires. Since the last accreditation, gender and racial-ethnic diversity has increased in the department. Of the five core faculty members, two are men and three are women. Current racial-ethnic self-identification of faculty members includes one Latino, one Asian-American, and four European-Americans.

Teaching

The Sociology faculty members employ a wide variety of teaching techniques that correspond to and reflect who they are both professionally and personally. Such pedagogical strategies include traditional lectures, lecture-discussions, debates, research teams, discussion groups, student led discussions, group projects, guest lectures, and multimedia projects. Sociology faculty members also invite students to apply sociological theories and methodology to their own experiences outside the classroom. Various members of the Sociology faculty create list-serves to promote intra-class communication between meetings, use videos to enhance student understanding of concepts presented in readings, plan assignments around computers in order to familiarize students with sociological research databases, have students work on the internet, and approach the expression of the students' ideas in other creative and distinctive ways.

Several Sociology faculty members have won teaching and other academic awards in the last ten years, including the Robert Fluno Award for Outstanding Teaching in the Social Sciences (received by two of our faculty members in recent years). Other academic honors include the Whitman College Alumni Service award (given to one of our senior faculty members), an award for Distinguished Contribution to Sociological Practice from the Pacific Sociological Association, and awards for Excellence in Teaching given at previous institutions (received by two of our faculty members before moving to Whitman). In addition, both of our Full Professors hold endowed chair or endowed professor positions.

As a department, we are very concerned with the success of our courses, as defined both by our students and by our institution more generally. Consistent with this orientation, almost all of our classes conclude with student evaluations being administered. In addition to the standard college form, in many courses, specialized qualitative evaluation sheets are also given to students that ask them to comment in greater detail about the distinctive features of the course. Many courses also utilize mid-semester or periodic evaluation during the semester. The results of these evaluations are examined carefully and necessary adjustments made prior to the course being taught again. In addition, every year, faculty members sit in on each others' classes as part of our process of evaluation for contract renewal, annual review, and/or tenure and promotion considerations. Finally, many members of our department are active participants in the events and activities sponsored by the college's Center for Teaching and Learning (the director of which is, coincidentally, a faculty member in our department); the institutional purpose of the CTL is to "promote a campus-wide environment that values, respects, and encourages excellent teaching."

Please see Appendix I for syllabi for required courses in the Accreditation Exhibit Room for detailed description of required course content.

Research

All five tenure-track faculty members follow an active agenda of research and writing that results in the publication of books and articles, as well as numerous presentations at professional conferences. The department faculty members follow research interests that both reflect their own professional interests and the

courses that they teach, and the active character of their research and writing feeds into the classroom in many ways. In addition, a number of the faculty in our department have successfully involved students in many of their own scholarly projects. This is reflected in a large number of co-authored publications and presentations in recent years, and also in our departmental faculty being the co-recipients of a total of eleven Perry Summer Research Grants (with undergraduate students) in the last 10 years. In addition, the Whitman College Prison Research Group, which was co-founded by a member of our department and in which several Sociology faculty currently participate (along with faculty and students from a variety of departments across campus, as well as administrative staff from the Washington State Penitentiary and other members of the local criminal justice community); participation in the Prison Research Group has led to a number of excellent senior thesis and other social research projects through the years. Please see Appendix II for curriculum vitae in Accreditation Exhibit Room for the scholarly accomplishments of individual faculty members.

Assessment

The assessment of students in our department takes place primarily in our individual courses, and in our senior thesis/Oral Comprehensive Examination. The determination of the extent to which our department is meeting the individual goals specified earlier in this document (i.e., our overall program effectiveness) comes largely through our Senior Assessment process. These individual objectives, as well as how their regular assessment is intended to lead to improvements in our academic program are discussed in detail in Appendix B, available in the Accreditation Exhibit Room.

The Senior Thesis And Oral Comprehensive Examination

As has already been explained, all senior Sociology (and Sociology-Environmental Studies) majors must write and defend a senior thesis as a requirement for graduation, and this is an activity that the departmental faculty take very seriously, reflecting our belief that, for the great majority of our majors, this is likely to be the single best indicator of a student’s mastery of the discipline of Sociology. The table below presents all of the senior thesis grades that have been given in our Sociology 492 (Directed Research) and Sociology 498 (Honors Thesis) courses during the past ten years.

Academic Year	Senior Majors Enrolled in Sociology 492/498	A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F	Has Not Completed the Senior Thesis Process (*)
1996-97	16	1	1	3	2	3	3	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1
1997-98	20	3	2	3	5	1	2	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	1
1998-99	20	0	4	4	3	3	1	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	1
1999-2000	18	1	1	3	3	3	1	1	0	4	0	0	1	0	0
2000-01	23	1	7	3	2	3	1	2	1	1	1	1	0	0	0
2001-02	19	1	2	3	5	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
2002-03	22	1	3	7	2	1	2	0	1	1	0	0	3	0	1
2003-04	28	1	7	6	4	4	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
2004-05	17	0	4	7	1	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
2005-06	20	1	4	4	2	2	2	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total (mean)	203 (20.3)	10	35	43	29	25	18	10	6	9	2	4	5	0	7

*This table includes one student from the past spring who we fully expect to complete her senior thesis requirements in the fall of 2006; it also includes a student who was awarded a degree posthumously by the Whitman faculty when she succumbed to illness while in the process of writing and preparing to defend her thesis.

Several things can be noted in these tabular data. First, it is clear that we have had very stable numbers of Sociology majors during the past decade, with an average of 20 senior thesis projects per year being pursued during the time period in question. Second, it will also be noted that we have had a fairly large number of senior theses in the A-range during the period represented above (44.9% of all our thesis grades given during that period have been A+, A and A-). We must admit to having had serious departmental discussions each year as we have met to assign final grades to our current cohort of senior theses, course, a strong case can be made that we should expect to have a reasonably large number of excellent theses – indeed, the fact that the college appears to be attracting increasingly able, educated and motivated students with each passing year, coupled with what we hope to be the effective and conscientiously-applied teaching abilities of all of those within the department, should predict a number of very successful results in this year-long, intensive process of research and writing.

It must also be noted in this regard that Sociology students do not “automatically” receive high grades simply for submitting a thesis project at the end of their senior year. Indeed, there have been theses submitted during the past decade that we have judged to be unacceptable academic work. When this has occurred, the students in question have been given the opportunity to revise and resubmit their senior theses (in the relatively small amount of time that they have had to do so before the end of the semester). However, such thesis “resubmissions” have an automatic “ceiling grade” of D-; that is, they can be made acceptable, but only at this minimal passing level. For this reason, there is significant incentive for students to work hard on their theses, hopefully in close consultation with their thesis chairs and committee members, *before* handing in their “final” draft in mid-April. During the past ten years, every student who has handed in a final thesis draft which we have found to be unacceptable has been able to make sufficient revision to avoid failing this thesis “course.” As a final point relating to the topic of our evaluation of the senior thesis projects, it should also be noted that just under 20% of our senior thesis grades during the past ten years (18.4%) have been within or below the C-range, suggesting that we do indeed use the entire range of grade possibilities available to us.

In addition to writing a senior thesis, our senior majors are also required to participate in an 80 minute Oral Comprehensive Examination, in which all of the members of the student’s thesis committee (which is comprised, at minimum, of three Sociology faculty members) verbally examine the student on the specifics of his/her thesis project, as well as his/her knowledge of the discipline of Sociology more generally. Members of other academic departments often serve as additional thesis committee members, at the student’s invitation, thus broadening in interesting ways the types of questions likely to be asked.

The student may be awarded a grade of Pass, Pass with distinction, or Failure to Pass, based upon the overall quality of his/her performance. As indicated in the table on page 69, almost half of our students (48%) during the past ten years have received grades of Pass with Distinction in their Oral Comprehensive Examinations. It is our sense (and certainly our hope) that this high degree of proficiency is largely reflective of the great emphasis currently given in the program to the importance of the verbal communication of Sociology by our students. It might also be noted that a fair number of our students in recent years have already made as many as three verbal presentations relating to their senior theses (in the Sociology 492/498 senior seminar, at the Whitman College Undergraduate Conference, and at the annual meetings of the Pacific Sociological Association) by the time that they appear before their senior thesis committee in their Oral Comprehensive Examination.

It might finally be noted that although an occasional student during the past ten years has initially failed to pass his/her Oral Comprehensive Examination and has thus had to retake a subsequent exam, we have had no students during this time who have ended the final semester of their Whitman career with a failure to receive a passing grade in this oral defense of their thesis (there have, however, been several students who never reached the point of handing in a thesis and participating in an Oral Comprehensive Examination, and the college records of these students show permanent Deferred or Incomplete grades for the senior thesis process).

Those senior Sociology majors who earn at least a grade of A- on their senior thesis and who pass their Oral

Academic Year	Senior Majors Enrolled in Sociology 492/498	Pass with Distinction	Pass (*)	Took Oral Comprehensive Examination but Failed to Pass	Has Not Completed the Senior Thesis Process (**)
1996-97	16	6	9	0	1
1997-98	20	13	6	0	1
1998-99	20	9	10	0	1
1999-2000	18	5	13	0	0
2000-01	23	10	13	0	0
2001-02	19	9	9	0	1
2002-03	22	11	10	0	1
2003-04	28	13	15	0	0
2004-05	17	10	6	0	1
2005-06	20	8	11	0	1
	203	94	102	0	7

*Includes a small number of students -- almost certainly fewer than five -- who failed the Oral Comprehensive Examination in their first attempt but who subsequently took and passed it.

**Includes one student from the past spring who we fully expect to complete her senior thesis requirements in the fall of 2006; also includes a student who was awarded a degree posthumously by the Whitman faculty when she succumbed to illness while in the process of writing and preparing to defend her thesis.

Comprehensive Examination with Distinction qualify for Honors in Major Study (provided that their departmental and college-wide cumulative grade point averages also meet college standards). The table at right shows the number of Sociology majors who have succeeded in earning Honors in Major Study during the past ten years.

Year	Number with honors in major study
1997	0
1998	6
1999	4
2000	2
2001	9
2002	5
2003	8
2004	9
2005	9
2006	7
Total	59

Future Plans For The Department

We present below eight specific items that our department intends to seriously discuss, with a high likelihood of implementation in future months and years. These plans and proposals have arisen from several different sources. First, there can be no denying that they are at least partially a result of our realization that assessment is clearly very much in the future of higher education, both generally and within our own college. Hence, it simply makes good sense for us to take advantage of the opportunity that an event like this accreditation affords us to decide exactly what we think should be the basis of this assessment, and to formulate the specific methods by which that assessment will take place. In this sense, these plans are at least partially the result of an external stimulus, although we hasten to add that we did not develop these responses to this stimulus begrudgingly or with anger. Periodic assessment in this sense does seem to us to be “the right thing to do” – so long as it is allowed to develop from within, and is not “imposed” upon us from above (and for the wrong reasons).

But it is also the case that a good portion of these possible plans for the future have developed out of the ongoing discussions and interactions that characterize our department, and its normal way of doing business. That is, in large measure, we formulated these plans based on the collective wisdom of how things have worked for us in the past, coupled with fresh ideas for the future that have come from the “new” faculty members who have joined our department within the past five years. This combination of “the old and the new” will hopefully allow us to avoid ossification and the mindless adherence to traditional ways of doing things, while at the same

time it will allow us to continue to draw from and build upon those elements of our departmental history that have helped us to accomplish what we have in the past. To walk this fine line between proven best practices and pedagogical and curricular innovation requires the kinds of internal evaluation suggested below. And we would like to think that we are correct in thinking that the ability and the willingness to accept the validity of varied methodologies as instruments of information-gathering in a process like this is a significant strength both of the discipline of Sociology in general, and of our department in particular.

With this as a backdrop, the following are specific plans that we will seriously consider implementing in the future (if we haven't already in the year since this document was written and submitted):

1. The more explicit and universal inclusion of questions in the Senior Oral Assessment mentioned in the first bullet point in the first section in the fourth table presented earlier (on the general topic of Assessment).
2. In order to help our students better address ethical issues in their research, and to enhance their sense of professional ethics relating to the discipline of Sociology, students who do empirical research for their senior thesis would be required to submit formal written proposals dealing with possible ethical concerns to the Sociology Department and/or to Whitman College's Human Subjects Committee within the next two years.
3. A possible departmental retreat for faculty members to discuss curricular matters and changes for the future of the department within the next two years.
4. Discussion of future ideas to more systematically evaluate student learning, such as a written exam outside of the senior thesis, or a student portfolio.
5. Develop an annual formal student evaluation mechanism of the senior thesis process within the next two years. Some faculty members do this individually, but it would be beneficial to implement this as a departmental evaluation.
6. Develop an annual senior exit survey within the next two years. This exit survey might be modeled after the Narrative Self-Assessment of the Whitman College Psychology Major.
7. Develop an alumni survey within the next two years that supplements existing alumni/ae survey data, to supplement whatever alumni data is generated by the college's Office of Institutional Research.
8. Participate (as a department) in the Assessment Workshop that will be sponsored by the Center for Teaching and Learning next fall.

An Appraisal Of Our Assessment

Our Program Assessment

Overall, it is our opinion that the Sociology Department does a good job of maintaining a high standard of excellence in teaching and learning, both for Sociology majors and for Whitman students more generally. And our faculty members clearly intend to maintain and build on both the teaching pedagogies and the assessment methodologies that have helped create a coherent and successful liberal arts Sociology program.

Thus, for example, we routinely assess various aspects of our program at weekly departmental meetings. Similarly, our faculty members all use student evaluations in their individual courses. And the capstone sequence requires faculty members to work together regularly and frequently so that assessment of student skills in the objectives identified at the beginning of this report is structurally incorporated into departmental pedagogy.

One specific way that we “assess our assessments” of our students is in the two annual meetings that we hold to decide final grades for senior thesis proposals (in the fall semester) and completed senior thesis projects (in the spring semester). At these meetings, we begin by presenting our individual (fall) or thesis committee (spring) grade recommendations, and then collectively and comparatively assess the quality of each project in relation to other projects both that year and in previous years. In addition, it is at the spring meeting that we collectively decide on the winner of our Ely Chertok award, which recognizes an outstanding thesis that demonstrates particular theoretical sophistication and conceptual rigor. In this discussion, the faculty compare all of the theses written during that academic year (and in so doing also of necessity assess the departmental standards of excellence).

There is still more that our department can do from the standpoint of systematic and ongoing assessment, however. For example, we can increase the routine inclusion of data-gathering for future assessment of our program (e.g., through an alumni survey, student evaluation of the thesis process, and/or an annual senior exit survey). Similarly, with the future cooperation of the appropriate campus offices, we can hopefully begin to systematically track such information as (a) the number of Sociology students who have done significant community service while here at Whitman; (b) the number who have served as elected officers within the ASWC student government; (c) the number who have received commendations at the Annual Student Services Recognition Banquet, etc.

In summary, we take seriously the consideration of adopting more systematic measures for outcomes-based assessment, so that drafting the next accreditation self-study will be easier, and the data more diverse and concrete. Indeed, in general, the Sociology Department finds it to be a worthwhile enterprise to brainstorm different systematic techniques to measure outcomes. We also recognize, however, that how we measure whether students are moving closer or farther away from our goals is, at some level, an inherently subjective process, and we believe very strongly that the rigid standardization of student learning is not a desirable path.

How We Conducted This Assessment

Our department chairperson attended an accreditation workshop at the Pacific Sociological Association meeting in April 2006, and brought back relevant assessment documents published by the American Sociological Association. Faculty members read and reviewed these documents. We then met as a department in a day-long meeting to draft this document. In this meeting, we formulated our goals based on many of the American Sociological Association’s recommendations, and added our own. From these documents, we assessed our departmental goals, and selected our assessment format. Individuals in the department retrieved relevant statistics included herein from individual records and from the Office of Institutional Research. The draft was circulated via e-mail once complete, and changes were made with collective approval. In the future, we intend to keep meeting as a department to discuss how both our students and our program are or are not meeting the goals set out here.

Appendices

Appendices and auxiliary materials are available in the Accreditation Exhibit Room.

Accreditation Self-Study Department of Sports Studies, Recreation and Athletics

Mission and Goals of the SSRA Department

The mission statement for the Department of Sports Studies, Recreation, and Athletics (SSRA) was developed by the Department during its 2006 self-study process requested by the President of the College, and was designed to align SSRA programs with the mission of Whitman College.

We believe that sport studies, recreation and athletics are an integral part of the overall educational experience at Whitman College. We provide unique and fundamentally different opportunities than those available in the traditional classroom. We strive to create a positive and challenging environment in which student-athletes can achieve their full potential. We emphasize athletic and academic excellence and provide quality competitive experiences, encouraging creativity, character, and responsibility.

Built upon the concepts of creativity, character, and responsibility, traits valued in the College's mission statement, SSRA provides an excellent medium through which these traits can be developed in our students. Another key concept for SSRA programs is "integration." We strive for our programs to be fully integrated into the educational mission of Whitman College. Ours may not always be a traditional classroom but it is, in fact, a classroom. Our mission is to educate through sport.

The SSRA department accommodates student needs through the mediums of varsity athletics, club sport and intramural activities, activity courses, and theory courses that lead to a minor in Sport Studies.

Varsity Athletics

The athletic department pursues excellence through varsity sport. We value the educational opportunities inherent in varsity athletics, and as such, we view our jobs as educators. As coaches and teachers, we teach student-athletes how to communicate effectively, how to lead and how to follow, how to come together to work toward common goals, how to take responsibility for their own choices and actions, how to embrace challenges, and how to respond to both winning and losing. These are important lessons and college is a pivotal time in the lives of our student-athletes to help foster these skills.

In addition to the educational component, Whitman Athletic teams work hard to be competitive. We strive to field teams in all sports that are capable of winning in the, highly competitive, Northwest conference and in NCAA III.

Club and Intramural Programs

The goal of club sports and the intramural program is to provide valuable competitive opportunities outside the varsity athletics context. These are student-initiated programs that offer students the opportunity to compete against other collegiate club teams in a less structured environment. Although, club sports are supported in part by institutional funds, generally speaking club sports at Whitman, typical of those across the country, are funded largely by the participants. This funding allows teams to travel and compete off-campus, primarily in the Northwest, and occasionally to larger events across the country.

Club sports at Whitman vary in their levels of organization and competition. Two tiers emerge – the top tier with high organization and competition includes lacrosse, cycling, snowboarding, rugby and ultimate Frisbee. The lower tier, which is less organized and which competes less frequently includes fencing, Tae Kwon Do, ice hockey and softball.

The goal of intramural sports is to provide recreational opportunities to the campus at large (mainly students, but faculty and staff also participate). Intramural sports allow students of every level of athleticism to be part of a special group. They are well organized by a student committee, but they are relaxed in atmosphere, with

training and win/loss outcomes falling secondary to simply allowing all with interest to participate. With participation, then, being the primary focus, IM sports should be evaluated very simply by the number of participants. IM sports have a long tradition of being very healthy at Whitman, and today is no exception. An estimated 70% of the student-body participates in IM sports, and the Princeton Review ranks Whitman College third in the category of “Everyone Plays Intramural Sports” behind the University of Notre Dame and the United States Air Force Academy.

SSRA Course Offerings

Not only do we view ourselves as teachers in the varsity context, but we also teach in a more traditional classroom setting. The SSRA department offers a variety of courses, both activity and theory, in athletic training, outdoor and recreation pursuits, leadership, sport psychology, coaching, women in sport, and a wide array of fitness and recreational activities. Prior to 2003, the SSRA department offered a Sports Studies Minor and a Sports Medicine minor. The sports medicine minor was dropped in 2003 due to changes in our staffing over the past several years. These staffing changes left us without teachers for critical courses, such as biomechanics, exercise physiology and motor learning, that are essential to any sport medicine minor. Faculty who have most recently taught these courses have been teaching them outside their area of expertise. This was not in the best interest of Whitman College students as they deserve to be taught by experts in the courses they choose. It was also not in the best interest of our faculty who taught these courses outside their area of expertise as the preparation demands were significant and their primary teaching and coaching duties were being negatively affected.

SSRA offers activity and theory courses. Activity classes are courses that offer skill instruction in a wide variety of activities. They are offered credit/no credit and therefore do not affect a students GPA. Credit for theses courses is based on attendance and participation. A student is allowed to use 8 activity credits toward their total credits required for graduation. Theory classes are lecture, seminar or research courses that present a body of knowledge and information on the course subject. These courses are offered for grade.

As noted in the 2006-07 course catalog, the requirements for the sport Studies minor include a minimum of 20 credits that must include SSRA 200 (First Aid), 490 (Practicum) and 495 (Senior Seminar). Of the remaining 15 credits, 13 must come from courses numbered 300 and above.

Also, as noted in the 2006-07 course catalog, through the minor and course offerings, Sport Studies, Recreation, and Athletics provides opportunity for all students to secure instruction and formal practice in a variety of recreational and physical education activities and provides academic and professional preparation for leadership, coaching athletics, athletic training, and recreation.

Enrollment in SSRA courses has remained steady over the past several academic years.

Theory and academic courses are well attended. SSRA courses have had an average enrollment of 455 per semester over the last four semesters.

Prior to 2003 the SSRA minor was divided into 2 tracks, a coaching track and a sport medicine track. The table at right indicates the number of students minoring in the SSRA from 1997 – 2007.

	SSRA –coaching track	SSRA — Sport Med. minor track	Total
1997	5	0	5
1998	4	3	7
1999	1	0	1
2000	1	4	5
2001	1	3	4
2002	2	3	5
2003	2	7	9
2004	2	2	4
2005	1	1	2
2006	4	1	5
2007	3	0	3

Note: Students listed in the Sport Medicine minor in 2003 were allowed to complete that track. Since 2004 all new minors have been Sport Studies minor, without a ‘track’ designation.

Description of the SSRA Department

The current department has four head coaches, one head athletic trainer and one Athletic Director all who hold SSRA-track faculty positions. All SSRA track faculty hold a Masters degree which is considered a terminal degree. There are also eight full-time head coaches who hold adjunct faculty instructor positions. Adjunct faculty either hold a masters degree or are working to complete their terminal degree in a timeline outlined in their contract. The department also has one part-time head coach and six others who teach individual activity courses listed in the SSRA catalog. These instructors have expertise and/or certification in the field they teach.

SSRA track faculty are considered non-tenured faculty by the college. They have a vote on the faculty floor and most of the other privileges and responsibilities afforded to Whitman College faculty. SSRA track faculty are responsible for their head coaching duties (including recruiting), teaching 7 credits per year, serving an administrative role (such as NCAA compliance coordinator, facilities director, SAAC coordinator), and acting as full, active members of the Whitman faculty.

Head Coaches who are adjunct faculty do not have voting privileges on the Whitman faculty floor however they do have departmental voting rights. Adjunct faculty positions in SSRA include head coaching duties (including recruiting), a small teaching load (0-2 credits/yr), or an administrative duty (such as field scheduling).

Also, since the time of our last accreditation, the SSRA department has added several new staff and support positions. We have recently added a full time sports information director, a fitness facilities director, a game management intern and an assistant athletic trainer. Also, since our last accreditation the department has added a new 10,000 sq/ft. Fitness Center, a 30 meter competitive pool and a soccer field complex. We are also currently involved in plans to renovate Sherwood Center, our primary athletic/recreation facility.

Assessment

Evaluating Varsity Athletics

“SUCCESS is peace of mind which is a direct result of self-satisfaction in knowing you made the effort to become the best that you are capable of becoming.”

-John Wooden, Basketball Hall of Fame (as a player and coach)

With a vision of athletic excellence in mind, evaluating varsity athletics presents some challenges – measuring the opportunity to win is certainly less quantitative than actual wins or losses. Coaches and faculty also value other aspects of the student-athlete experience (personal growth, improvement, leadership, teamwork, etc.) that are also difficult to measure.

A program’s win-loss record is a common evaluative tool, but more important than outcome-based measures are measures that evaluate process. The quality of the athletic experience, student-athlete growth and maturity, and improvement of athletes and teams are process-oriented measures that should carry weight in the overall evaluation process.

This focus on both tangible and intangible markers for success is in line with the overall NCAA Division III Philosophy:

“Colleges and universities in Division III place highest priority on the overall quality of the educational experience and on the successful completion of all students’ academic programs. They seek to establish and maintain an environment in which a student-athlete’s athletics activities are conducted as an integral part of the student-athlete’s educational experience.”

With our philosophy intimately tied to that of the NCAA Division III philosophy, Whitman’s evaluation of varsity athletics focuses on an examination of the overall student-athlete experience, including the element of competitiveness.

With this in mind, the new Athletics Director (appointed September 2006) has initiated a process through which the SSRA Department will set goals prior to the start of the 2007-08 academic year under the themes of Campus Climate, Academic Climate, and Athletic Competitiveness. Addressing the first theme of campus climate, the department will set goals and strategies to increase the positive impact that student-athletes have on campus. Goals will be set in the area of community service, diversity, fan support and alumni connection. The Academic Climate theme will seek to set standards and find ways to ensure student athletes mirror or exceed the academic performance of the greater Whitman student body. Finally, the theme of Athletic Competitiveness will set some process oriented goals designed to help achieve excellence in athletic outcomes.

The purpose of setting goals along these three themes is to work toward the overall goal given to the Athletic Director by the President and Dean of the Faculty to further integrate athletics into the overall mission of Whitman College. The Campus Climate theme seeks to ensure that our athletics programming has a positive impact on the campus. The Academic Climate theme seeks to ensure that student athletes are representative of the overall student body, a key element of an integrated athletics program. The Athletic Competitive theme seeks to produce excellence in our athletic programs consistent with the excellence demonstrated in other departments at Whitman College.

Evaluating the SSRA Minor

A departmental evaluation of the minor is scheduled for fall 2007. The new Department Chair / Athletic Director will lead the SSRA department through a thorough evaluation that will assess the goal of the minor and the coursework necessary to meet that goal. The current minor offers a varied set of courses in the area of recreation, coaching, sport medicine and the social and psychological aspects of sport. This is a broad stroke approach that allows for strong instruction in each class area as our staff are teaching classes within their particular area of expertise. There are voices within the department that would prefer that SSRA offer a more traditional sport studies minor. There have also been thoughts of adding a recreation track within the SSRA minor. The evaluation this fall will consider both these options as we look at our minor.

Evaluating courses

The evaluation of our academic offerings should be two-fold: a) adequately meeting the interests of our students (offering the right classes and providing sufficient spaces in our classes), and b) the quality of those classes. Student need is indicated by class enrollment. When certain classes are filled, additional sections or like classes are added. For example, this was the case with our yoga offering. In the past four semesters the yoga class had a wait-list long enough to fill an additional section. In response, a section was added each semester and a Pilates class was added to offer another similar option for students. Quality of the classes is assessed by student evaluations and peer review. The student evaluations and peer review are incorporated into the faculty contract renewal process. As such, the renewal process acts as instruction quality control. A student's mastery of the material is determined by the instructor as outlined in the syllabus.

Evaluating Club and Intramural Programs

Club sports and intramural programs are evaluated by two components:

- Number of sports offered and the participation in those sports
- Level of competition of sports, keeping in mind this may fluctuate depending on the goals of the particular students involved at any given time (especially in cases when the coaches are students).

SSRA currently has a successful club sports program that offers numerous and varied opportunities for students to become involved and compete. Nearly 70% of the student body participates in the intramural program.

Analysis and Appraisal

Whitman offers a vibrant and competitive athletics program that competes in the Northwest Conference (NWC) of the NCAA III. Recent successes include 2 NWC championships, 6 NWC coach of the year honors,

6 teams to be ranked in the NCAA III top 25, 2 teams to reach the NCAA III national tournament and 9 individuals to reach NCAA III national competitions. Recent successes also include 6 Academic All-American athletes, numerous others who earned Academic All-Region or All District honors as well as multiple student-athletes who earned spots on All-region teams and All-NWC teams in their particular sports.

Although our minor serves the interest of only a few students each year, it is an important aspect of the department as it offers courses and activities in which students typically are interested. The SSRA academic offerings and the minor will be further evaluated in the 2007 fall semester. The new Athletic Director / SSRA Department Chair has set in place a plan to examine the minor and course offerings in the fall of 2007 with the goal of recommending necessary changes to the faculty for the 2007-08 academic year.

The club and intramural program is active and healthy. A peer review conducted by the department in the Spring of 2006 and presented to the college President found that Whitman College financially supports its club sport programs at a higher level than any of our peer institutions (NWC and Panel of 14).

Projection

Because the SSRA department is under new leadership, there will certainly be changes within the department. New achievement goals will be set and pursued and the Sport Studies minor and course offerings will be evaluated. The priority for the department is to be fully integrated into the college and to work along with our faculty colleagues in other departments to further the educational mission of Whitman College.

Division II
Humanities and Arts

Art History and Visual Culture Studies
Art (Studio)
Asian Studies
Classics
English
Foreign Languages and Literatures
 Chinese
 French
 German Studies
 Japanese
 Spanish
 World Literature
Gender Studies
Music
Philosophy
Religion
Rhetoric and Film Studies
Speech and Debate
Theatre

Accreditation Self-Study
Department of Art History and Visual Culture Studies

The Department of Art History and Visual Culture Studies has existed as an independent program since the fall of 2003. Before then, the two art historians together with the studio artists comprised the Art Department. There were a number of factors that made the creation of an independent department necessary. Foremost among them was the increasing complexity of overseeing the two areas by a single department Chair. In 1992-93 the Art Department comprised two art historians, two studio artists, and one adjunct studio artist. In 2002-03 it comprised three tenured/tenure-track art historians, one visiting art historian, two tenured/tenure-track studio artists, and four visiting artists. In 1992-93 the Art Department offered a total of 26 courses; in 2002-03 the number had reached 50. Further, in 2002-03 the department oversaw a staff of two studio technicians and four student slide library assistants (in 1992-93 there had been no staff positions). By 2002-03 art history and studio art were functioning as independent departments. Above all, the *de jure* creation of separate departments in 2003 gave greater clarity of definition to the uniqueness of visual culture studies at Whitman College.

Art History and Visual Culture Studies is an interdisciplinary program with three art historians at its core, but which is enhanced by course offerings from members of the departments of English, Philosophy, Classics, and Japanese, among others.¹ Conversely, the three art historians have contributed to other interdisciplinary programs on campus (Gender Studies, Asian Studies and German Studies). Dennis Crockett (hired in 1992) specializes in modern German visual culture, and teaches courses in European visual culture since the thirteenth century. Marie Clifford (2001) specializes in American modernism and teaches courses dealing with the visual culture of the Americas (Incas to contemporary). Roz Hammers (2002) specialized in Song and Yuan China, and taught courses in the visual culture of South and East Asia. Professor Hammers was also responsible for the *Introduction to Asian Studies*, the foundation course for the Asian Studies program. In May 2006 Dr. Hammers accepted a position at the University of Hong Kong. During the spring of 2007 we will conduct a search for her replacement. The curriculum will very likely be altered to feature the strengths of the new hire, but this person is expected to be responsible for the *Introduction to Asian Studies* course.

The courses taught by the art historians and the professors outside the department study the production, consumption, and/or meaning of visual culture. These are not courses that merely incorporate images – as textual references, for example – but courses that focus on the object itself. Traditional art history has tended to focus on categorization and applying anecdotes to isolated images. Our primary goal is visual literacy. Though our methodologies vary, we all approach historical conditions and visual production consciously from the point of view of twenty-first-century Americans immersed in our own unique and extremely complex visual culture. By learning to read meaning into historical images (an Aztec relief, for example) our students become more acutely aware of the process of reading meaning into contemporary visual culture.

Each of us has devoted a great deal of time rethinking the discipline of art history, and we have increasingly incorporated our own problems with art history pedagogy into our courses. The term “art history” implies a fixed canon. Textbooks designed for undergraduate art history courses invariably outline a stylistic development of “great works” in an uncritical manner. These books carry grandiose titles like *The Story of Art*, *History of Modern Art*, *Art through the Ages*, *Italian Renaissance Art*, *The Art of Asia*, and even *Art History* (!). There is a major flaw to all such books: no mention is made of how the canon being presented came into being. All authors seem to work under the assumption that there exists a fixed, universal history of art. The subjective role of the art historian and the art museum in the creation of the canon is simply ignored. In our courses we attempt to unfix this tidy history. All of our courses openly acknowledge the fact that a dominant Western narrative has sculpted the discipline of art history. This subjective Western perspective cannot be ignored, but must be fully comprehended before we can proceed to study the history of visual culture. This is the point of

¹ Art History and Visual Culture Studies majors and minors may also apply approved courses from outside the program toward the major/minor. This includes most film studies courses offered by the Departments of Foreign Languages and Rhetoric and Film Studies.

departure of our *Introduction to Art History and Visual Culture Studies* course, and it is picked up again in every course that we teach. Our personal problems with the discipline of art history are clearly articulated during the first class meeting of each of our courses. Whether we are discussing *quattrocento* Florence, the New York School of the 1940s, or Song Dynasty China, there is a tradition of historical writing that must be tackled at the outset. In all of our courses some primary works of the grand narratives are read and discussed (for example, Giorgio Vasari, J. J. Winckelmann, Ananda Coomaraswamy, Irving Sandler) together with contemporary revisionist approaches. Exams and written assignments always return to this material. Student are expected to refer to these works in their presentations. Our majors are expected to be fluent in the grand narratives and its problems on their senior exams.

Curricular changes since 1997

The foundation courses have always been regarded as the most important courses within the art history curriculum. They serve as popular distribution offerings in the area of Fine Arts (enrollments generally range from 25 to 30 per section), and as the courses that attract majors and minors to the program. In 1997 the two-semester *Survey of Western Art* (Art 101 & 102) presented a traditional tour of great works. In order to clarify the content of the two courses, the titles were changed in 1999: Art 101 became *Ancient, Classical, & Medieval Art*, and Art 102, *Western Visual Culture Since 1300*. Art 101 was taught by Paul Dewey (passed away 2000) and our sabbatical replacements; Art 102 was taught by all art history faculty. With the hiring of Marie Clifford in 2001 the title of Art 101 was changed to *Art & Power in the Ancient & Medieval World* (in order to reflect her approach to the course).

With the addition of Roz Hammers in 2002, it became clear that the 100-level courses no longer reflected the strengths of the art history faculty (Art 101 was now taught exclusively by sabbatical replacements). With the establishment of the Art History and Visual Culture Studies Department in 2003 our focus turned to the foundation courses. We had long recognized the Western bias of our 100-level courses, and agreed that major reconceptualization was required to represent the new department. In 2004 we introduced a new one-semester foundation course that replaced Arth 101 and 102: Arth 103 *Introduction to Art History and Visual Culture Studies*. Although there is no set course outline nor common required readings, the purpose of this course (as implied by the title) is to introduce students to both the discipline of art history and the manner in which art historians have gone about their business. Rather than propounding the canon of art history, the canon is discussed critically and transparently. The biases of museum culture and the concept Fine Arts is also approached critically. Beyond that, professors chooses their own examples to highlight the importance, production and consumption of objects created to be seen. Demand for this course is great (see below). We had offered two courses per semester since 2004-05, but in 2006-07, with the addition of a sabbatical replacement and the Johnston Visiting Professor, we will offer nine sections of Arth 103.

Evaluation methods for this course vary by professor and by semester, but we employ a mix of exams (with or without images), papers (research or analysis), and presentations.

Our 200-level courses offer breadth within our general geographical areas Europe: (*Greek and Roman Art, Renaissance Art, European Art 1780-1880, Modern Art 1874-1924, Modern and Contemporary Art 1924-present, Aesthetics, Environmental Aesthetics, History of Photography*); The Americas: (*Art of the Americas, American Art and Visual Culture: Colonial to 1900, American Art and Visual Culture: 20th Century*); Asia: (*Introduction to East Asian Art, Introduction to South and Southeast Asian Art, Asian Architecture, Introduction to Japanese Art and Aesthetics*). We also offer regular special topics courses within these areas – generally one-time-only offerings (e.g. *Chinese*

Semester	sec-tions offered	enrollment	closed section
Fall 2004	2	58	2
Spring 2005	2	44	2
Fall 2005	2	51	2
Spring 2006	2	50	2
Fall 2006	5	103	5
Spring 2007	5	4	4

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Gardens & Landscape, The Garden of Chinese Calligraphy, The Chinese Scholar's Garden, Medieval Art, The Nude in Art, The Book in Asia, Japanese Narrative Picture Scrolls, The Body in Contemporary Art, Entertaining Violence). Requirements for these courses vary, but generally two exams, eight to fifteen pages of writing, and a presentation are required. Class sizes generally range from twelve to twenty.

Each of us teaches a semi-annual seminar (300-level: *Gender in Contemporary Visual Culture* [Clifford], *Modernity and Nationalism in Asian Art* [Hammers], *German Visual Culture 1871-1937* [Crockett]). These courses generally require twelve to fifteen pages of writing, at least two presentations, and one or two exams. Ten to fifteen are usually enrolled.

Senior Seminar in Art History is offered annually in the fall, and taught by each of us on a rotating basis. This course focuses on the historiography and contemporary methodologies of the discipline with special attention paid to books intended for undergraduates. Increasingly, Arth 103 is serving as an important point of common reference for the Senior Seminar.

The art history major is required to complete 36 credits including: *Introduction to Art History and Visual Culture Studies*, two studio art courses, *Senior Seminar in Art History*, and one additional seminar. Seniors must pass an oral exam comprising four sections (reflecting four topics or courses taken at Whitman [by at least two professors]). Based on the oral exams that we undertook at the Masters level, the senior exams are the best way for us to assess the program's strengths and weaknesses. The exams are administered in two one-hour sections. Discussions center on major issues and readings from the courses. Rather than focusing on formal analysis of "great works," students are expected to discuss in synthetic terms various contexts of production (e.g., patronage, original display, intended market). Students are expected to address important primary and secondary literature without prompting (e.g., any discussion of the work of Edouard Manet should address Charles Baudelaire's essay "The Painting of Modern Life"). Significantly, the senior exams bring together all the professors who contribute to the program.

For honors, students are required to pass the senior exam with distinction, and to write an honors thesis (the length of which is dictated by the topic, generally forty to eighty pages).

Before 2000-01 a senior thesis was required of all majors. It was felt, however, that the writing of a thesis was advantageous only to those students who were exceptionally inspired to explore an aspect of the discipline, and that most art history majors were better served by taking an additional art history course. In order to fulfill the major requirements, students took a minimum of only four 200- or 300-level art history courses. In many cases, art history majors had taken only one or two upper-level art history courses prior to their senior year. Such preparation is rarely sufficient for senior thesis work. Students are now required to take five approved art history/visual culture studies courses beyond Arth 103. The number of our majors has remained consistent since the change in requirement, and the number of majors graduating with honors has risen slightly.²

Facilities

We currently have two classrooms fully fitted for digital and analog image projection (Olin 157 with 63 seats and Olin 161 with 18 seats. Our seminar room, Olin 161, and our visual resources center were constructed during the summer of 1998. The classrooms have state-of-the-art projection and audio equipment. The visual resources center has state-of-the-art scanning equipment and a slide collection of 100,000 slides. It is overseen by student assistants under the coordination of Cheyenne Wissenbach, the Academic Technology Consultant to Olin Hall.

Future plans

In our opinion, there is little wrong with the current senior assessment exam. It is an excellent barometer in

² Between 1997 and 2000, when senior theses were required of all majors, 6 of 35 majors graduated with honors (17%); since 2001, 10 of 48 majors have graduated with honors (21%).

assessing the preparation of our majors. And, while the senior seminar is not standardized, we are satisfied that it sufficiently prepares our majors for graduate study in art history or related areas. Regarding the curriculum, the major work has been accomplished over the past four years. The three art historians have had a rotation of courses that offer both historical breadth and theoretical depth. We expect our new hire in Asian art history to maintain the standards established over the previous four years.

We would like to become less reliant on replacements. For each of the past four years we have needed to hire at least one full-time replacement. The results have been mixed; graduate students can bring fresh ideas into the program, but they are generally inexperienced teachers. Once the Asianist is hired, we will focus on proposing a fourth tenure-track position. The desirable areas of specialization that we have discussed in the past are African/African Diaspora and Media Studies. The addition of a fourth position would do away with the need for sabbatical replacements, and establish greater stability in the curriculum.

Accreditation Self-Study
Department of Art (Studio)

Goals of the Department

The focus of the Whitman College Studio Arts program is the enrichment of the intellect through the creation, expression, and interpretation of complex ideas in a wide range of visual forms. We look to serve the needs of students preparing for careers in the fine arts as well as the needs of students who want to develop their creative abilities in the service of other fields of inquiry.

Description of the Department

The Studio Art program offers a wide range of opportunities to study many approaches to studio art practices. Disciplines include drawing, painting, ceramics, sculpture, book arts, photography, printmaking, and new genre art practices. At the introductory level we stress fluency with materials, techniques, and visual language. As the student progresses, the intellectual, conceptual, and cultural issues become more challenging.

The program provides a balance between traditional material and visually based art practices, and conceptually, driven modes of art production. Students participating in the studio art program learn creative problem-solving skills, abstract-thinking skills, and learn how to interpret and express complex ideas in a wide range of visual and sensorial forms. We also teach counter-intuitive, counter-rational and non-linear thinking skills which are essential to a liberal arts education.

The Studio Art Program feels that by examining creative problem-solving strategies we can help create tolerance to divergent ways of thinking, and raise student awareness of and increase sensitivity to the importance of diversity in human culture. This will make students more lively and productive members of any creative and intellectual communities in which they may be involved.

In 1997 the Art Department included both Art History and Studio Art. There were two tenure-track positions and several visiting, non tenure-track positions in Studio Art, along with one tenure-track position in Art History. In the academic year of 2002-03 the Studio Art and Art History areas separated, becoming the Department of Studio Art and the Department of Art History and Visual Culture Studies. Currently in the Studio Art Department there are two tenure-track positions, four visiting full time non-tenure track positions, and two part-time positions.

Between 1997 and 2005 the total number of Studio Art majors has fluctuated between 28 and 40, averaging 34 declared Studio Art majors. The total number of students that the art department serves fluctuates between 400 and 600 students with an average of 482.

The numbers of Studio Art majors and minors has remained fairly consistent since 1997 although the total number of students served by the department continues to grow. It is possible to project a growth in majors and minors once the new building is functional, additional faculty have been hired, and the total population of the college increases.

Assessment of the academic program and effectiveness

Assessing the effectiveness of our teaching and student learning is done primarily through individual and group critiques. Critiques are conducted at strategic intervals throughout the development of individual projects during a semester and at the midterm and final exam period. The critique process assesses the individual's progress and the results of the course as a whole. During critiques the faculty reviews student artwork. They listen and present questions as the student describes and defends his or her creative process. The faculty is able to assess student understanding of the project and course content by viewing the artwork to determine how well it satisfies the technical and conceptual project requirements. We are also able to assess the development of student's critical thinking and ability to analyze and express ideas verbally. Students are

asked to discuss the visual issues, content/conceptual issues, and the art historical context of their work. Portfolio reviews occur frequently within a semester with written and individual oral feedback given on assigned projects and completed portfolios. Student work is also addressed at the midterm and end of the semester, which gives us the opportunity to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the student's progress. During these critiques we are also able to determine the strength, weakness, and relevance of the course as well.

When students are juniors and have declared Studio Art as a major, they participate in the junior review process. This is a general portfolio review with selected Studio Art faculty. It is intended to prepare the student for the intensive senior thesis year.

In their senior year Studio Art majors participate in the senior thesis/seminar experience. This is a year long studio practice course and seminar course in which students create and present an original body of work in conjunction with continued research, group and individual critiques, and the presentation of written artist statements. In the fall semester, seniors present an oral defense of their work which is an opportunity for the faculty to evaluate the students' progress in their studio work, their ability to defend that work orally and position themselves within a cultural and historical framework. Students participate in a faculty-lead research trip to New York City during Thanksgiving Break. This trip allows students to experience the contemporary and historical art works that most students only know through reproduction. During the senior Studio Art New York trip, students visit galleries, museums, and practicing artists' studios. This allows them to see work that they would not have access to in the Northwest and tends to be an extremely transformative experience. This is an unusual aspect of our program that many college art programs do not offer.

The senior studio art experience culminates with the Senior Art Exhibition in the Sheehan Gallery. During the 14th week of spring semester, students install, present, and defend in an oral and written statement an exhibition of their original artwork. This process directly mirrors the experience of participating in a professional group exhibition. An outside reviewer, who is a highly accomplished professional in the field of fine art, juries this exhibition. After meeting with the students and evaluating the show, three awards are presented to the top three senior Studio Art majors. This exhibition has the highest attendance of all of the shows put on in the gallery during the academic year.

The Studio Art department is committed to open and honest, democratic communication between all of the members. One way in which faculty assess our program is by formally discussing the effectiveness and goals as a part of our monthly departmental faculty meetings. Informal discussions of goals, concerns, and challenges are an important part of day-to-day interactions in the department. We work to come to a consensus on problems and find ways to implement our goals. Regular internal departmental surveys of the faculty are conducted to measure and analyze the program's strengths, weaknesses, and overall effectiveness.

Each instructor looks at course evaluations to gauge the success of the courses taught. Student feedback is also evident through discussion during courses and letters from former students. Finally, the activities students pursue when they leave the Studio Art program can be seen as evidence of our success and evidence of where we can improve.

We assess the outcome of our program in terms of the enrichment of students' life experiences, personal growth, maturity, and intellectual development from the time they come into the department until they leave as seniors as indicated by following abilities:

- Visual acuity as witnessed in the improvement of student ability to organize visual material and to make complex and cohesive visual statements.
- Verbal response within course and critique dialogue.
- Writing as expressed in artist statements.
- Ability to receive and request criticism graciously.

- Ability to take on higher levels of responsibility.
- Respect and concern for their work, workspace, professors, and student colleagues.
- Student willingness to help others accomplish their goals.
- Student ability to formulate questions, resolve conflicts, and recognize the problems in their work as impetus for future work.

Students who have mastered these skills have gone on to pursue degrees at the post-baccalaureate, Master of Fine Art, and doctoral level. Schools students are attending or have attended include Yale, Harvard, UCLA, Columbia, University of Tasmania, the Chicago Art Institute, Pratt, Cranbrook, and the Vermont Studio Center.

The Whitman Studio Art program has also prepared students to advance in many art-related professions. Many former students go on to teach art at all levels, from primary to graduate level. We have alumni working in the following fields: museum and gallery work, fine arts foundry, art therapy, architecture, department store design, costume design, graphic design, interior design, industrial design, film industry, and non-profit arts administration among others.

Many of our students have continued to work as independent exhibiting artists working in multimedia, painting, book arts, sculpture, ceramics, glass, and new genres. A Whitman Philosophy/English major who was trained by the Studio Art Department has exhibited at the Guggenheim in Bilbao Spain, the Whitney, and other major museums and is the head of Multi-Media Studies at NYU.

Some of the non-art related fields our graduates have pursued are:

Library science	Landscape design
Veterinary medicine	Environmental ethics
Physical therapy	Medicine
Dentistry	Chemistry
Biological scientist	Clinical Psychology
Business management	Forestry
French professor	Physics
State Department	Civil Engineering
Government Defense Industry	Law

Assessment and Appraisal

There are three main challenges for the Whitman Studio Art Department: we need to convert temporary appointments to tenure-track appointments, update our facility, and reconfigure our curriculum.

1. Addition of Faculty: The department currently has two tenure-track faculty lines, three full-time visiting faculty, one part-time faculty, and one adjunct staff position. We would like to convert the three full time visiting positions to tenure-track positions. The conversion of these three full-time temporary positions in the areas of printmaking/book-arts, sculpture, and digital/foundations to tenure-track positions would create long-term continuity in our curriculum and would more equitably distribute administrative service, advising, and introductory course work loads among tenure-track faculty. There have only been two tenure-track positions since 1997. In the fall of 2006 we began this process by proposing and being granted permission to do a diversity search, which will upgrade the visiting assistant professor position in sculpture to a tenure-track line. Visiting faculty have not been expected to take on administrative and advising work, so all the duties of a large department have fallen on the two permanent people. When one of those people is on sabbatical, all the advising of thirty art majors and the administration of a seven-person department falls to one person.

Whitman students have faced long wait lists when trying to take a studio art class because Studio Art has not been able to meet student demand for classes. Many students have not been able to get into a studio

class at all. Students also face the problem of developing a working relationship with a visiting professor only to have that professor's contract expire midway through the student's program. Having five full-time, tenure-track positions in the department would provide us with a range of diverse and qualified people to teach in the senior seminar/thesis program. It would allow us to update, enrich, and diversify the faculty and course offerings in all areas of the Art Department. Additionally, converting these positions would allow the Studio Art Department to make regular contributions to the core program and make more cross-curricular contributions to the campus community. The conversion of the three temporary positions to tenure-track lines would bring Whitman's Studio Art Department into the median in terms of the number of tenure-track faculty members within Studio Art Departments within the Panel of 14 schools to which we compare ourselves. There is an average of one art faculty member to every 400 students within the Panel of 14; currently the ratio at Whitman College is one to 700 students.

2. Updating the facility: The current art building was built in 1970 and was intended to serve the needs of two faculty members and five Studio Art majors. We now have seven faculty members and thirty-two majors. In order to resolve the problems that come with an out-of-date and over-crowded facility, we are in the process of designing and building the 38,000 square foot Whitman College Center for Visual Art. This building is planned with the flexibility to provide for the needs of the Studio Art program for the next twenty to thirty years. This facility is environmentally conscious in construction and design. It will address the current health and safety concerns with proper ventilation and security in each of the labs and student studios. The pedagogical space available to the department will increase to three times what it is now, which will allow us to serve the current and future needs of our students, the college and local communities more effectively.

A dedicated digital lab will enable the department to further integrate digital media into each of the studio areas and to continue to update our curricular offerings with access to new media. One of our main goals with the new building is to upgrade our digital offerings in every area, offering a seamless integration of digital tools within all fine art disciplines and to provide dedicated organized space for each discipline; all spaces within the new building will be conjoined by a digital nervous system. We are looking forward to offering digital modeling programs in the sculpture and ceramics area, and incorporating digital imaging in all of the 2D areas. The dedicated digital arts lab will incorporate a digital media resource library that will allow us to continue to develop courses that address the digital environment as a creative space. This space will support the course offerings of the Visiting Assistant Professor in New Genre position that was created in the 2004-05 school year. The construction of the building has begun and we are planning on moving into the new Center for Visual Arts in May of 2008.

3. Reconfiguration of the curriculum: Finally, we are working to update our curriculum to facilitate seamless transitions between Studio Art areas, and to create an environment that supports diverse course offerings within the department and interdisciplinary courses that create interaction with programs throughout the college curriculum.

The catalogue and schedule are being reorganized with the goal of clarifying the structure and goals of the department to make them more consistent with other departments within Whitman College and other Studio Art departments in other liberal arts colleges similar to Whitman. Currently the course offerings and scheduling of classes is being reorganized to separate introductory and intermediate/advanced courses in all Studio Art disciplines. The requirements for the Studio Art major and minor are being refined with the purpose of making it easier for Studio Art majors to participate in off campus programs and still complete the requirements for the senior year. These adjustments have also streamlined the requirements for the Studio Art major and minor to make them flexible enough so that a student might easily emphasize two or three-dimensional disciplines. In the past, the requirements forced Studio Art minors to take the majority of their courses in two-dimensional media, causing the department to lose many potential three-dimensionally oriented Studio Art minors. We are working toward creating a balance between the number of courses offered in two-dimensional and three-dimensional disciplines to reflect the demand for courses. In the 2002-03 academic years we hired a full-time visiting professor in sculpture. This addition to the three-dimensional

area has allowed us to begin to offer a balance between the two and three-dimensional courses we are able to offer. In the 2006-07 academic year the visiting assistant professor position in sculpture has been upgraded to a tenure-track with expectation of continued growth and development in the three-dimensional disciplines. We have changed the title of *Introduction to Studio and Design* to *Introduction to Visual Art Practices*. This change will better reflect the content and focus of the course, which is not only to create studio artists and designers, but also to address a wide range of ways of organizing visual and sensorial material, and to consider many different approaches to visual production of cultural material.

The Studio Art Department is fortunate that the kinds of students who choose to come to Whitman College appreciate the role studio art plays in a liberal arts education. Growing enrollment and demand for studio classes has created challenges that are leading Studio Art to take a prominent presence in campus culture. We are looking forward to building on our past successes and creating new possibilities for Studio Art at Whitman College.

Accreditation Self-Study
Asian Studies Program

Program Goals

Asian Studies seeks to produce majors with broad-based knowledge of the histories, cultures, arts, literatures and contemporary situations of Asia as a whole; with basic facility in at least one Asian language; and with a sophisticated critical take on “Asia” as a category which has its own history, politics and problems. Less formally, the Program actively seeks to support various Asia-related events and clubs on campus.

Description Of The Program

Asian Studies is an interdisciplinary “program,” not a department of its own. It is constituted by faculty members whose primary tenure “home” is in one of the traditional departments in the Social Sciences (currently History, Anthropology, Psychology, Politics) and Humanities (currently Religion, Art History, Studio Art, Foreign Languages and Literatures), but whose own research areas and/or background happen to be Asia-focused. This faculty group, whose constituency predictably changes with sabbatical leaves, new hires, and retirements or other permanent departures, collaborates to oversee the program. Because all the work we do for Asian Studies is outside of and mostly on top of our ordinary departmental responsibilities, we try to share the load by taking turns serving as Director of Asian Studies, teaching our introductory course *Introduction to Asian Studies*, teaching (as an overload) our capstone *Senior Seminar in Asian Studies* and directing *Individual Projects in Asian Studies*, and by distributing ourselves at least somewhat equally among senior thesis committees (all Asian Studies majors enroll in *Thesis Research* during the fall of their senior year and *Thesis* or *Honors Thesis* during the spring, when each of them composes an original senior thesis, which is then defended orally before a committee of three Asian Studies faculty members).

Like the faculty, so the curriculum depends upon, and changes with, the resources, plans, and needs of individual traditional departments. Officially, the only Asian Studies courses are the ones already mentioned: *Introduction to Asian Studies*, *Senior Seminar in Asian Studies*, *Individual Projects in Asian Studies*, *Thesis Research* and *Thesis/Honors Thesis*, together with a *Special Topics* rubric which allows us to offer credit for courses taught by occasional Asian and/or Asianist visitors to the faculty (see below). Thus most of an Asian Studies major’s credits are not earned in Asian Studies *per se*, but rather in the different traditional departments from which we hail. (Fortunately, all the involved departments have been overwhelmingly supportive in allowing us all to include the needs of Asian Studies along with our ordinary departmental obligations when designing course-loads or occasionally teaching *Introduction to Asian Studies*, and in hiring Asianists within the different disciplines in the first place). Because Whitman has employed a sufficient number of Asianists in various traditional departments since the creation of the Asian Studies major in 1995, this has not proven unduly problematic; each year when we survey the entire faculty to update the list of courses that “count” toward Asian Studies we show an impressive array (the current 2006 College catalog includes 55 separate courses).

But this is not to say that an Asian Studies major’s curriculum is willy-nilly. On the contrary, the major is designed around a series of requirements meant to guarantee breadth in both geographic “Area Clusters” and disciplinary “Subject Clusters. Thus all majors’ general credits (in addition to the required *Introduction to Asian Studies*, *Senior Seminar* and *Thesis*) must include at least two courses in each of at least two of the four major “Area Clusters” or regions of Asia as we define them (Japan, China, South/Southeast Asia, Central/Northeast Asia), and at least two courses in each of at least two of the four main “Subject Clusters” or disciplinary approaches to the study of Asia in which we represent Language (courses at the 300 level or higher, or in a second Asian language); Art and Literature; History and Religion; Social Science. These “clusters” have proven flexible enough to provide structure to the major and breadth of substantive and methodological coverage despite ever-changing personnel and specific Asia-related course offerings.

Introduction to Asian Studies, *Senior Seminar* and especially the *Senior Thesis* are all designed to provide a deeper focus to this breadth of study. *Introduction to Asian Studies* is not a “rice paddies” survey of Asian

civilizations but rather a critical examination of the idea of “Asia” itself, based on reading and discussion of theoretical accounts coupled with selected primary/Asian materials. *Senior Seminar* brings the majors together to present their individual research to each other, and gain from each others’ criticisms and suggestions. Senior thesis provides students an opportunity to explore a topic of greatest interest in real depth, while synthesizing and locating his or her own work within the broader substantive and methodological discourses that characterize the Asian Studies field.

Underlying the coherence of the major, especially in terms of depth, is the language requirement, which reflects our belief that without at least basic language skills one has not really begun to study Asia. Language as a “Subject Cluster” includes only advanced courses or courses in a second Asian language because *all* majors must study at least one Asian language for at least two years (i.e., complete the 100-level and 200-level sequences in Chinese or Japanese) or demonstrate equivalent fluency (we have occasionally had native speakers of an Asian language as majors, and one [Anglo] major successfully completed two years’ equivalence in Hindi while studying abroad in India). Chinese and Japanese language instruction at Whitman, as well as the Asian presence on campus, are greatly enhanced by “native speakers” who spend a year at Whitman as part of those programs; and though we regret that Chinese and Japanese continue to be one-FTE teaching areas – rectifying this situation (then, especially in Japanese) was our top priority during the 1997 accreditation – the College has helped to mitigate the overload by hiring adjunct faculty to assist in the teaching of both languages. Most majors, with our hearty encouragement, enrich their language learning and general coursework with lived experience in Asia, on faculty-approved study abroad programs (especially in Taiwan, China, Japan and Sri Lanka) and/or Whitman’s own *Summer Studies in China* and other special programs such as the Freeman study tours (see below).

While we have witnessed fairly steady numbers in terms of graduating majors (four in 1995, 1996 and 2004; five in 2001; six in 1998; seven in 2003; eight in 2000; nine in 2002; ten in 1999 and 2006; eleven in 1997 and 2005), we look back on the decade since our last accreditation report with a sense of achievement and growth, for several reasons. First, at the time of our last accreditation we were a new program, testing what were at that point for Whitman, anyway, very new waters (ours was the first interdisciplinary major program approved by the faculty). Second, despite fluctuating personnel, the then-existing tenure-track lines in Asian Studies-related fields (i.e., History, Anthropology, Religion, Art, Foreign Languages and Literatures) have been preserved, while new Asian Studies-related lines have been created (in History, Religion, Politics, Psychology and Art History); our numbers are now nearly double what they originally were. Third, we all have found ways to further expand the breadth and depth of our students’ learning, and Asia’s presence on the Whitman campus, ranging from hosting one-time visiting educators or special events to securing large outside grants for new faculty lines or large-scale programs. The relative maturity, faculty strength and campus presence we now enjoy have only been achieved, however, through on-going self-assessment, response to perceived problems, and constant effort to seize what opportunities we can. Each of these three points thus warrants a bit more explication, which we proceed to provide in order.

Our relative maturity as a Program is the collective experience we have gained through a decade’s worth of meetings and especially all-group email exchanges to hash out curricular, budgetary and staffing problems and opportunities that have arisen; what makes us more confident facing accreditation ten years later is not only the sheer expansion of resources but perhaps more importantly our collective experience assuring us of our capacity to work collaboratively and adjust to changes as they emerge. Thus, the syllabus for our required entry-level course, *Introduction to Asian Studies*, has undergone almost annual revision based on the changing personnel who teach it and our collective discussions about what it should be doing for the overall major program of any individual student. The course is challenging for a number of reasons: students come with an expectation of a general introductory (or what gets called “rice paddies”) course which must be at least partly fulfilled in order to sustain the theoretical and methodological discussions which are its actual focus; each of us comes from a different disciplinary background and/or focuses on a different part of Asia, which naturally affects not only what we decide to teach but how we decide to teach it; “Asian Studies” itself is a gigantic,

multi-focal enterprise still in search of its own identity throughout the academy. Similarly, our most recent discussions have concentrated on the inadequacies we perceive in the current structure of the *Senior Seminar in Asian Studies*. Though the presentation and mutual-criticism of thesis work is certainly both useful and vital to the overall thesis experience, our assessment of the varied quality of recent Asian Studies theses has led us to examine ways in which the seminar can be made more substantial. We have decided to add meetings in which each of us will present some aspect of her or his own scholarship and introduce senior majors to the ins-and-outs of the profession in particular areas and subjects, recalling more explicitly the theoretical issues raised in *Introduction to Asian Studies* about the underlying/assumed unity of all the senior thesis topics as “Asian Studies.”

The expansion of our faculty group has also been important – and problematic – in a number of ways. We have been aware from the beginning of an imbalance favoring East Asia over the rest of Asia in our faculty resources, a situation which is slowly being mitigated; three of the newest Asian Studies lines have expanded faculty expertise in South Asia and in our fourth “Area Cluster,” Central and Northeast Asia/Islamic Asia. At the time the major was created, a non-tenure-track position in History was occupied by a Central Asianist; our fourth area was originally conceived within the purview of her courses, and those taught by two successors in the adjunct position. Fortunately, in 2003 History was able to transform this position into a permanent, tenure-track one through the redefinition of an existing line in British history as Islamic history. Two years earlier, in 2001, Religion was given an entirely new line in Near Eastern Religions. The presence of two experts in Islamic Studies, and now two (formerly only one) experts in South Asian Studies, greatly strengthens our overall coverage and in particular helps us to keep open the question of just what “Asia” is. Yet it continues to be a major problem and focus of our on-going discussions that we are still unable to offer our majors who are interested in the study of Asia outside China and Japan an adequate opportunity to pursue their interests in the greatest depth, i.e., to study the foundational languages for those areas (e.g., Sanskrit for South Asia or Arabic for the Islamic world). Though we employ special topics courses, independent studies and advice about study abroad opportunities to help bridge this gap, it is our top priority at this writing that a faculty line focused on at least one of these Asian languages other than Chinese and Japanese be added by the College. Likewise, staffing our *Introduction to Asian Studies* and *Senior Seminar* continue to be vexing problems because neither fulfills any faculty member’s departmental load and because the latter must be taught as an overload; we have managed to keep the program going only through the good will of individual Asian Studies faculty members and their departments as well as the Administration (which as indicated has supported our push for more Asianist hires in the different disciplines; has treated *Introduction to Asian Studies* as a valid substitute for General Studies obligations of individual professors, making it possible to count it within one’s regular course load; and has actively endorsed our attempts to get outside grants). While one such grant (see below) helped us staff *Introduction to Asian Studies* as part of a new line in Asian Art History, that faculty member has just taken another job, reopening the issue of staffing the introductory course.

Perhaps the clearest reason that we feel much stronger today than we did pursuing self-study for accreditation a decade ago, however, is that we have successfully worked together to plan, host and fund wide-ranging Asia-related activities which promote awareness of the field of Asian Studies in the greater Whitman and Walla Walla community, provide our students access to specialists who further enrich our own coverage, and constitute processes as well as occasions that help enrich and reinforce our collective identity, which of course is important given the fact that we are not a traditional “department.”

Much of our special programming is self-sponsored within the College. We avail ourselves of the Visiting Educators Fund to bring outside experts on facets of Asian Studies for lectures, have a long-standing arrangement with the College’s Sheehan Gallery to sponsor Asia-related art exhibits with some regularity (the Gallery Director is also an Asianist himself), try to “double dip” Asian Studies with other departmental opportunities for bringing in outside experts (such as named lectureships and visiting professorships or sabbatical replacement positions); help as we can to fund requests for Asia-related events which we receive from student organizations and colleagues both within and outside the Asian Studies fold; help coordinate

“Asian Culture Month” (in April); serve as advisors to the various Asia-related clubs and interest houses on campus, and so forth.

But as mentioned, we have also been successful in assessing specific needs and, with the assistance of the Administration, securing outside funding to address them. Thus for example, a proposal we made to the Luce Foundation on the basis of our assessment of the general need for more Asianist faculty as well as the particular need for an Asian Studies-trained scholar to rework and teach *Introduction to Asian Studies* resulted in a 1999 grant which provided the seed money for the above-mentioned new line in Asian Art History (which we hope will continue to be defined as such despite the departure of the position’s current occupant). A subsequent successful proposal to the Freeman Foundation in 2000-2001, based on our assessment of opportunities for expanding Asia’s presence on campus, resulted in a \$650,000 grant over four years (2002-03 to 2005-06) to bring scholars and practitioners from Asia to campus; to sponsor *Special Topics* courses, public lectures and exhibitions; to allow some of the students in the *Special Topics* courses the opportunity to make a summer study tour in China or Japan relevant to the subject matter; and to strengthen our Asia-related library resources. During the penultimate year, we sponsored with other funds (from the Program budget, Visiting Educators Fund, the President’s office, the Sheehan Gallery budget, and considerable out-of-pocket expenditure by one of the Asian Studies faculty members) a more modest series of programs focused on South Asia (“South Asian Studies at Whitman, 2004-2005”) which included a “Bollywood” film series, guest lectures, celebration of indigenous festivals, sponsorship of an Indian dance troupe and an exhibition of South Asian photography to complement a range of special South Asia-related courses offered that year. We also applied for and received a Scholar-in-Residence grant from the Fulbright Foundation to bring a Sri Lankan literature expert to campus (which unfortunately was blocked on the Sri Lankan side). Most recently, a successful Asianet grant, produced in our on-going recognition that Southeast Asia remains a significant hole in our coverage, will bring a Vietnamese scholar to campus for one semester next year.

Assessment of Academic Program and Effectiveness

The *Senior Thesis* is our best tool for assessing the degree to which our majors have acquired the sort of broad-based substantive and methodological knowledge of Asia, facility with language, and critical consciousness which we seek to provide them. All senior Asian Studies majors research and compose a substantial, original thesis on a topic of their choice within the broad purview of the field which is then defended orally before a committee of three Asian Studies faculty members in the Spring Semester of their senior year.

The thesis-writing process ideally begins during the second or third year of a student’s career, when he or she begins to think about possible topics and discuss them with relevant Asian Studies faculty members, often in conjunction with study abroad considerations. At least during the fourth year itself, the thesis becomes a central focus of an Asian Studies major’s work. During the fall s/he enrolls in *Thesis Research* as a rubric within which to produce a research plan, detailed outline, bibliography of relevant works, and a rough draft of the thesis. During the spring s/he enrolls in *Thesis* or, if s/he meets College-wide requirements, *Honors Thesis*, reworking the rough draft on the basis of the suggestions and criticisms of at least the three Asian Studies faculty members, who will serve on his/her thesis committee, and submitting a final draft which is then subjected to a one-hour oral examination. During the spring s/he also enrolls in *Senior Seminar in Asian Studies* and, as mentioned, presents the thesis to the entire group of majors in order to solicit their input as well. At the conclusion of the oral examination, the thesis committee determines a grade for *Thesis* (or *Honors Thesis*), and awards Honors in major study and Distinction in the oral examination, or not, as appropriate. These determinations take into consideration not only the quality of the written thesis itself, but also the degree to which the student demonstrates acquisition of broad-based knowledge of Asia, facility with an Asian language or languages, and ability to traverse the various disciplinary orientations that constitute Asian Studies.

This process also inevitably entails self-assessment. The constitution of thesis committees, schedules and procedures for deadlines and examinations, discussions of research plans and rough drafts, structure of the *Senior Seminar* and special cases needing our dispensation always figure prominently in our meetings and all-group email exchanges. Reading the theses and especially the discussions that ensue in assessing them,

moreover, provide us important, on-going insight into problems and gaps that in turn fuel our larger, on-going self-assessment. Thus, as mentioned, the variable quality of recent senior theses has caused us to re-examine the structure of *Senior Seminar*. Currently a one-credit course taught as an overload by a willing member of our group, *Senior Seminar* does the important work of creating a group identity among our majors and allowing them to benefit from each others' insights. But it fails to sustain a more comprehensive consideration of what Asian Studies actually is, which would be appropriate at this final stage of a student's major program and would increase the quality of senior theses and especially oral examinations. Addressing this problem is complex, however, because the seminar work is already an overload for the professor who kindly agrees to teach it, and the very nature of our program – multidisciplinary and differently area-specialized – makes this a bigger task than any individual faculty member can handle. Our solution is to try a new structure which incorporates not only all the majors, but also all the faculty, into the *Senior Seminar* schedule. Members of thesis committees will be invited to attend the sessions when their individual advisees present their material, and will also be asked to lead a session themselves, on an example of their own scholarship, which students will read in advance, in order to revisit the diversity of the field and the theoretical and methodological problems that diversity entails, a general discussion to which they were introduced in *Introduction to Asian Studies*. We hope that this will further increase the coherence of the Program itself, and of individual majors' overall knowledge of Asian Studies.

Much of the growth of Asian Studies since our last accreditation has occurred in this way: we take stock of inevitable gaps in our coverage (imagine if “Western Studies” – everything European and American, for all of history, in all its languages – were conducted by about ten faculty members, and as an overload no less!) and do our best to address them. Doing so involves short-term and sometimes stop-gap measures, such as hiring sabbatical replacements who broaden coverage or applying for the sorts of grants already described, as well as more long-term measures, such as adding new courses to our individual repertoires, arguing for and receiving new faculty lines, and developing new study-abroad opportunities such as *Summer Studies in China*.

Assessment and Appraisal

We certainly provide our majors (there is no minor in Asian Studies) a broader, deeper, and more coherent program than we offered them ten years ago. Our language teaching has been strengthened (though we still see a need for new tenure-track lines in Chinese and Japanese, and especially in a non-East-Asian language), and the simultaneous growth of Study Abroad in the last decade has further increased student opportunities to access Asian cultures as only language skills and other lived experience make possible. And we have given Asian Studies a real, on-going presence on campus through the wide and varied events, visiting educators, exhibitions, and other special programs that we have sponsored.

But as will be clear from what has already been written, our progress in institutionalizing Asian Studies at Whitman College – despite the many structural difficulties involved in any interdisciplinary program – has been the result of on-going good will, hard extra work, and an open and on-going collaborative self-assessment that occurs pretty much whenever two or more of us meet, and which dominates our formal meetings in person and via email. At this writing it is our short-term first priority to see the Asian Art History position filled with someone who can resume teaching the introductory Asian Studies course, and hopefully can devote time to coordinating a more substantive senior seminar as well; several of us likely will be involved in that search. Our long-term priority is to continue our progress in balancing our coverage of things Chinese and Japanese with attention to the rest of Asia, especially its major languages. We will perennially be thus wishing for more breadth (we are especially interested in seeing more traditional departments develop Asianist lines, e.g., Philosophy and Economics) and more language coverage, and struggling to find ways to maximize what we do cover. Discourse on the meaning of “Asia,” and the self-identity of “Asian Studies” in the wider academy, continue to develop and change; our program undoubtedly will continue to do so as well. But our strong “team spirit” and commitment to on-going self-assessment and revision leaves us confident that we will be able to meet those challenges, and others which confront us, both small and large, in the coming decade.

Accreditation Self-Study
Department of Classics

Goals of the Department

The Department of Classics seeks to give students access to the Greco-Roman cultures, to teach students the ancient languages, Latin and Greek, which can best give them that access, and to develop students' abilities to integrate the several modes of inquiry, including literary, historical and cultural analysis, which characterize the discipline of Classics. Our major program is grounded in the study of the ancient languages, for this is the best tool available for the understanding of these ancient cultures and for the intellectual discipline which can train minds for all types of academic inquiry.

Description of the Department

The Department of Classics was created in 1996 and was then staffed by one tenure-track position and one non-tenure-track position. A second tenure-track position was created in 1999 and we first offered a regular major program in 2000. Thus the program has changed much since the last accreditation review in 1996. At the time of the creation of the major program, we needed to review our course offerings to create a curricular structure appropriate for a major program, but we were also mindful of the need to continue to serve students at the college who would not major in Classics.

Whitman's General Studies program includes a required first-year course, *Antiquity and Modernity*, which includes a significant component of classical material. Our department's link to that program was made permanent by the second tenure-track appointment which is defined as 2/3 in Classics and 1/3 in General Studies. Our departmental contribution to the General Studies program has been great, for our first tenure-track instructor also devotes one third of his teaching to the General Studies program. His participation in that program is made possible by a part-time adjunct position in Classics. In addition, for the last four years, a fourth instructor of Classics has taught in the General Studies program in addition to serving as a sabbatical replacement in Classics. The Classics Department's rich contribution to the General Studies program has been one of the most important ways in which we serve the curriculum outside of our major offerings.

The Department of Classics also offers civilization courses open to students at all levels of preparation and requiring no knowledge of the ancient languages. The most popular of these are *Ancient Mythology* and *Women in Antiquity*. We offer other civilization courses at a higher level but open to non-language students including, *Greek and Roman Art* and *Ancient Theatre*. Each of these classes fulfills requirements in other major programs, but also may be used to fulfill requirements for the Classics major. We created *Greek and Roman Art* shortly after the last accreditation report in 1996. In that document we described our "Future Plans" thus: "The biggest gap in the offerings of the Classics department is Ancient Art." Our *Greek and Roman Art* course fills that gap. We also offer a topics course in civilization, *Topics in Classical Studies*. This course replaces our prior *Masterpieces of Ancient Literature* and allows the department to offer one-time courses which can serve both our majors and the students from across the college. Our 1996 report affirmed, "We also need to do a better job of teaching more prose authors." The 2006 offering of *Topics in Classical Studies*, "The Greek and Roman Invention of History," was part of our effort to include prose authors more fully in our civilization curriculum. Our 2004 appointment of Elizabeth Vandiver for the second tenure-track position in Classics has allowed us to offer both *Greek and Roman Art* and this topics course on historiography. Her areas of expertise help to assure that art and prose authors will play an increased role in the department's curriculum.

The Department of Classics offers both ancient Classical languages, Latin and Ancient Greek. *Beginning Latin* and *Intermediate Latin* are offered every year, and *Beginning* and *Intermediate Ancient Greek* are offered in alternate years. We adopted this structure of offerings because Latin has usually had higher enrollments than Greek. Fall language enrollments for our beginning language courses show that the offering of *Beginning Ancient Greek* draws some enrollment away from *Beginning Latin*. Maximizing the availability of beginning level ancient language instruction is essential for the success of our major program. We serve relatively few majors, so we need every opportunity to lure the innocent into the study of dead language.

The Classics Department created its regularly offered major program in 2000. Our graduates have been few; we are pleased to be graduating three in '06. Given our small numbers and the requirement that we offer instruction to these majors in two ancient languages, we created *Advanced Seminar in Classical Languages* at the time we established the major program. This course, taught each fall semester, assigns all the upper-level language students to one of our instructors for that semester. Some of the students register for the class as *Advanced Seminar in Classical Languages* for four credits. Others register for *Independent Study* in Latin or Greek, for fewer credits, but are grouped according to which languages they study and are taught by the same instructor. This allows us to group our upper-level Latin students and our upper-level Greek students. Those students who are registered for *Advanced Seminar in Classical Languages* attend a weekly session apart from the other advanced language students. In this session we introduce our majors to the tools of the field which they will need for their work on their senior theses. All Classics majors are required to complete a senior thesis or an honors thesis. The department is forced to offer a significant quantity of overload instruction, for our advanced students have various proficiencies at reading, must be exposed to both prose and poetry and are studying two ancient languages. The enrollment figures for *Advanced Seminar in Classical Languages* are therefore deceptive, for all advanced language students are assigned to the instructor of that course in the fall. Some special cases get carried by the other instructor, and all independent study instruction in the spring semester is carried as overload.

Our Senior Assessment in Major Study consists of a written comprehensive examination normally administered in January and an oral defense of the thesis administered in April. For the written portion each student must respond to untranslated original language material for one-third of this examination. The other two-thirds of the written examination seek to assess how well each student has developed the ability to integrate the various materials and techniques which constitute our discipline. Since our major requires work in the department of history and may include work in ancient art or philosophy or theatre or rhetoric, we construct a written examination which will call upon a student to demonstrate an ability to reach across these various sub-disciplines.

Assessment of the academic program and effectiveness

For students completing the major program in Classics, our best tools for the assessment of the program's effectiveness are the Senior Assessment in Major Study and the Senior Thesis. Most glaringly evident is the ability our students have acquired in reading Ancient Greek and Latin. Our strongest students develop an advanced ability in both languages, but our program meets its minimal language goals if a graduating student has good control of one language and adequate control of the other. In particular, we need to see that our students can respond to original language materials in developing interpretations and arguments.

For students outside of our major program, we assess the program's effectiveness by examinations and papers. The former are best for assessing the effectiveness of our language instruction and the latter are best for assessing the effectiveness of our efforts to teach students to integrate the several modes of inquiry which constitute Classics. Because the number of our students is small, we instructors are very aware of problems which may arise.

In 2001 we identified a problem with our second-year language instruction. The Chair of the department reported the problem in his 2001 Activity Report to the Dean of Faculty:

“The second-year language classes have been a problem for many years. My colleague, Professor Uzzi, and I have identified the second-year language classes as the area of the curriculum with which we are least satisfied and which we would most like to improve. At this level of ability the students no longer experience the joy of watching the grammar of the language unfold before them, but they lack the ability to read with a speed adequate to cover much text. Typically, in Classics departments around the country, this class is a bore for both students and instructors, as it is dedicated to grinding through as much text as possible in the hope of increasing reading speed while tediously reviewing the syntax and morphology which the students have already encountered in their introductory course. Second-

year language classes are usually very light on intellectual content. Though enrollment attrition in Classical languages is always high, it is typically highest during the second year.

So I resolved to teach compelling intellectual content. I am pleased to report that this fall's offering was the best second-year language class I have ever offered. I called it "Ancient Theologies," and read the *Bacchae* of Euripides and the Gospel of John, comparing how the ancient religions of Dionysus and Jesus conceive of the divine and the relations of humans to the divine. Though we certainly did spend class time working through the Greek texts, we did so with a purpose. We discussed vigorously and deeply. The students' papers were excellent. They (and I) were engaged with what we were doing, and felt compelled to work hard at the Greek to better clarify our understandings of the Theologies."

This departmental initiative for changing the instructional methods in the second year language classes was the most important way in which we have changed our courses in recent years. It did not involve a change of course title, but it has visibly improved our students' engagement with the material at a crucial time in their careers, near the semester in which they may declare a Classics major. Following this innovation our program has grown considerably, and our students at the intermediate level write stronger papers, for they are using the language to advance an argument. They care about the questions the class is addressing because the class is addressing more profound questions. By giving our second year language classes thematic unity and rich intellectual content, we give our students a reason to pursue the difficult task of learning to use the ancient languages well.

The other significant assessment of the effectiveness of the program which led to substantive curricular modification occurred in our work on senior theses. We noticed that our students didn't adequately understand the parameters of our field. That is, they didn't understand the variety of techniques which Classicists can employ for the analysis of texts and issues. It was in response to this problem that we created *Advanced Seminar in Classical Languages*, and in particular, its weekly session on the ancillary disciplines of Classics: textual criticism, epigraphy, literary history, comparative grammar, etc. With the tools acquired in this course, our senior students have become better able to use an *apparatus criticus* or other technical tools in the work on their senior theses.

Analysis and Projection

The goals of the program in Classics could well be different. Some colleges of Whitman's caliber have deemphasized the study of ancient languages in favor of the study of civilization. Such programs are generally called "Classical Studies" rather than "Classics." Our program remains of the old-fashioned sort which values the study of dead languages. This is generally agreed to be the more rigorous sort of program; it is certainly the more challenging sort of program. The Department of Classics currently believes that Whitman should be offering this more rigorous program. Nationally enrollment in ancient languages is holding steady, even while programs in German are going under. As Whitman has increased its selectivity in recent years, we have drawn some students to the college who already have some prior study of Latin. The number of our majors has grown. We graduated no majors in 2003, two in '04, one in '05, three in '06 and have four for '07. Thirteen students completed the first year of Ancient Greek at Whitman in '05. For a school of our size, that is outstanding. The Classics department had a total ancient language enrollment of 50 in the '02-'03 academic year, 51 in '03-'04, 66 in '04-'05. Learning Ancient Greek and Latin is likely as difficult as learning Calculus, but it is of much less utility in the world. If the number of students willing to put out the considerable effort to learn the relatively useless Ancient Greek and Latin languages should diminish over the next decade, Whitman's department of Classics would yield to the decline of the West and create a major program in "Classical Studies" to replace its existing major program in "Classics." That sad moment is not yet upon us. For the present our increasing enrollments suggest that we can retain our "Classics" major program. Students at Whitman still want to learn the ancient languages, and we best serve them by offering that most rich and rigorous means of accessing the ancient world.

In assessment of our current program we find that many of our best students link their study of Classics with major or minor study in related fields. This has been especially true of the study of History and Art History.

We have been very lucky in the last five years to have a strong instructor at Whitman in Ancient History in the Department of History. Unfortunately, this position is non-tenure-track. Since our major program requires supporting coursework in Ancient History, the department of Classics is vulnerable to disruptions in the offerings in Ancient History. Our highest priority is the regularization of this position in Ancient History and a strong tenure-track appointment which can help to inspire and support our students.

Whitman has been working hard in recent years to diversify its curriculum. This poses something of a challenge for the Department of Classics. Once upon a time students of the ancient world studied the Greco-Roman world. Whitman students of today and tomorrow have the opportunity to study the ancient Chinese or Indian worlds and may choose not to study Greece and Rome. We are committed to supporting the diversification of the college's curriculum and to turning that to our own advantage. In the spring of 2006 we offered *Comparative Indo-European Epic*, team taught by a member of our department and by an Indologist from the Department of Religion. The course concentrated upon the *Iliad* of Homer and the *Ramayana* of Valmiki. The instructors sought to show the close relations between these two ancient texts and to demonstrate that multiculturalism is not an invention of the modern world.

The diversification of the curriculum tends to favor the study of the contemporary world over the study of the past. The Department of Classics is also committed to demonstrating that the past remains significant for the contemporary world. In the spring of 2007 we are offering *Achilles in the Trenches; The Classical Tradition and the First World War*. This course explores the ways in which the Classical tradition has been important for modern people coming to terms with their contemporary experience. While the First World War might not be fully contemporary, we hope that the demonstration of the link from 700 BCE to 1918 might make it easier for our students to extend the connection another hundred years.

With the above paragraphs we seek to demonstrate that we remain actively engaged in developing our curriculum to meet the changing interests of our students and our institution, even while we continue to offer access to one of the most rigorous and traditional activities in the Academy, the study of Ancient Greek and Latin.

Accreditation Self-Study
Department of English

I. Goals:

The English major is dedicated to investing students with the ability to engage effectively, both orally and in written form, with literary texts from a wide variety of different perspectives. Students who complete the major will acquire, above all, a deep understanding of effective close reading practices, complemented by a broad understanding of literary history, theoretical approaches to literature, and the evolution of genre. Writing is a crucial component of this literary engagement, and the English major works to provide students with an eye (and ear) for the elements of writerly craft and technique; to express their experience of story and voice, sense and sound, idea and form in the written word. Courses are available in three general areas: literary analysis, expository writing, and creative writing. Students who explore the expository writing and creative writing options in our major will also develop expertise in the creation of fictional, non-fictional, and poetic literary texts.

The English minor is designed to invest students who minor in English with a good understanding of the aforementioned skills, although more limited in depth and breadth. Students who elect to take English courses either for distribution or to supplement other majors will acquire a basic sense of close reading and effective writing practices, and also knowledge of one or more of the historical periods or literary approaches to literature.

All English Department courses, with the exception of the *Junior/Senior Seminar*, are open to non-majors and thus provide all Whitman students with a context in which they can hone their reading, writing, and literary research skills.

II. Description: The English Department

A) The English Major

The major is designed to achieve our objectives by leading our students through four distinct academic stages: English 290, the required period and major authors courses, electives, and the *Junior/Senior Seminar*. The “gateway” to the major is English 290, *Approaches to the Study of Literature*. This course focuses on identifying the kinds of questions that are asked in literary study and on introducing students to the key objectives of literary study. Students learn effective close reading practices, acquiring both the techniques that allow them to unpack the subtle inferences and tensions embedded within literature, and the critical vocabulary necessary to express their own interpretations of these elements of the text effectively. The three major genres are introduced (poetry, fiction, and drama), and students are taught to approach them using both broad critical approaches and analytical techniques that are particularly useful for each genre. While the course is not designed to teach theory in depth, it does introduce students to the rudiments of literary research and to the range of theoretical frameworks within which close reading takes place. Considerable emphasis is placed on effective analytical writing in this course. Indeed, a substantial amount of class time is devoted to developing a strong sense of the structure and style of a written argument. Rewriting is presented as a crucial element of writing practice, and assignments require multiple revisions. In addition, the course also introduces research techniques (information literacy) that will be emphasized in subsequent courses. This course, not open to first semester first-year students, is most often taken at the end of the first year or during the sophomore year.

At the heart of the second level of instruction are four required “period courses.” These four courses are required to ensure students’ understanding of literary history will be broad and cumulative. Students may select from courses in three periods of American literature and six periods of English literature. To ensure students have a strong understanding of both American and English literature, at least two courses must be in English literature and at least one course must be in American Literature. Students can select the fourth required period course from either English or American literary offerings. We have found that giving students

a degree of autonomy in their selection increases their investment in literary studies without sacrificing breadth.

To provide students with a strong sense of literary periods and the evolution of various genres and subgenres over time, as well as familiarity with early literature, the major requires that one of the two required English literature period courses be an early period course (*Medieval Literature, English Renaissance Literature, or Restoration and Eighteenth-Century English*). The early period requirement reflects the degree to which a sense of literary history depends upon some experience in reading early and influential examples of genres reworked and revised in later periods.

The major also requires that students take a course on one of three *Major Authors: Chaucer, Shakespeare, or Milton*. This requirement complements the historical breadth we are working to provide students by having them engage with at least one author who has been foundational to literary studies. The major author component also provides substantial depth. While students can deploy close reading practices in all their courses, the *Major Authors* course allows them to explore in-depth one deeply influential author, gives them the opportunity to trace the development of themes and tendencies in the work of a single writer over time, and enables them to examine the way in which elements of the author's work and the genres he used responded to socio-cultural conditions.

The third level of study includes electives chosen by the student. We value a degree of student choice in the major's program because we feel that student autonomy increases motivation. Moreover, exploring their choices enables them to consider and evaluate critically the benefits of adding different literary approaches, historical periods, or national literatures to their individual program. Therefore, to complete the required 36 credits of the major, students select two electives from among the English Department's 300-level listings. To increase the availability of choices, we allow one of the electives to be, with the written approval of the English department, a literature course in World Literature numbered 300 or higher, or a course in literature offered by the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures numbered above 306. The two electives can also be chosen from 300-level expository and creative writing classes, our craft seminars, our period courses, and the English department's 300-level special studies in literature courses.

The upper-level special studies electives offer variety that supplements the strong framework provided by the period courses. The courses change each year, appealing to a broad range of students. Special studies courses also make use of faculty expertise, as faculty members frequently teach in their research area (giving students access to cutting-edge research on literary studies).

Upper-level courses dedicated specifically to writing, both "expository" and "creative," can also be used as elective credits. These courses provide students with the opportunity to develop their skills in writing in a variety of genres – including the academic essay, the creative non-fiction essay, the short story, and poetry. Special Studies courses have also been offered as craft courses, giving students an opportunity to develop the creative side of their skills to greater depth.

The fourth level of study for our students is English 491, the *Junior/Senior Seminar*, the only English course which is open only to majors. Because this course functions as our major's capstone, it is most frequently taken by seniors. This course is designed to extend and enhance student accomplishments in many of the objectives of the major. Upper-level students pursue an intensive study of a literary topic and write and rewrite a major research paper. This course pushes the research skills acquired during English 290 to a significantly higher level, exposing students to research methodologies and practices. Writing skills are fine-tuned, in part through writing the substantial research paper in full draft form and then rewriting it in response to feedback. For students who go on to graduate school, this exercise is an excellent preparation for the graduate research paper, as it demands a good grounding in scholarship on the chosen text and excellent analytical skills that enable the student to articulate a position with a degree of originality that adds to or challenges other critical

approaches to the work. The course also offers seniors the opportunity to practice oral presentations. Oral analysis is built into most of the courses in the major through individual and group presentations, participation in class discussion, and student-led discussions. The *Junior-Senior Seminar* allows students to expand on the oral skills gained through these experiences, not only through the opportunity to participate in a small seminar environment, but also through completing mock oral exams. Weaving this requirement into the seminar has significantly improved the percentage of students who pass the final oral exam.

In addition to the four stages of the major requirements, we offer students the opportunity to take Independent Studies or to write a thesis. We do not require a thesis of our majors, because we believe the existing selection of courses already allows students access to variety, in-depth analysis, and autonomy. However, the thesis option is open for students who wish to follow a particular research interest that is not covered by current course offerings and are able to formulate independently a solid research prospectus. Students may write a thesis for course credit or for honors in major study.

We frequently attract students who are double majors. Such pairings, in the past, have included fields that are clearly related to English, such as classics, theatre, foreign languages, music, and psychology. Other combinations have included economics, biology, chemistry, and math-physics.

B) The English Minor

While any student can take English courses, the curriculum of the English Major is designed to produce cumulative results for those students who choose to focus on literary study and writing. The English minor is necessarily less comprehensive, but the department attempts to ensure that students taking the minor have similar requirements to those taking the major. This includes a minimum of twenty credits, including two period courses in English Literature, one period course in American Literature, one course in a major English writer, and one additional literature or writing course in English or World Literature numbered above 300.

C) Broader College Responsibilities

Out of the total number of classes taught by the department each semester, more than one-third are introductory courses designed to help students fulfill the general education requirements of the college. These include expository writing courses, which hone students' skills through frequent practice and peer critiques; creative writing courses, which allow students, both majors and non-majors, to create their own poetry, fiction, and creative non-fiction; introductory courses in fiction, poetry, and drama, which provide a strong grounding in literary genres; and *Introduction to Literature and the Humanities* courses, which are thematically organized and deal with a broad range of topics and literary genres, including areas of gender, race, class, and national and international identities. They may also concentrate on universal human questions, such as cosmopolitanism, or the recently offered "Meaning of Life." Our introductory courses attract so much interest that we continue to offer multiple sections every semester.

The English Department is deeply committed to contributing to interdisciplinary majors and has made it a matter of policy to offer *both* upper and lower level classes that contribute to interdisciplinary majors on a regular basis. Our commitment stems from our role in the formation of interdisciplinary opportunities for students. One member of the department was one of two faculty members who presented the Gender Studies Minor (subsequently a major) for faculty vote in 1993, and she continues, to this day, to be on Gender Studies Major advisory committees and to direct Gender Studies theses. Another member is on the Steering Committee for Race and Ethnic Studies, and she and another member have contributed regularly over the years to what was once called the "American Ethnic Studies Minor." She has since also contributed to the design of the newly approved Environmental Studies/Humanities program. Upper-level special topics courses also offer students the opportunity to explore Race and Ethnic studies, Post-Colonial studies, and Gender Studies and contribute to the major programs in Race and Ethnic Studies and in Gender Studies.

Our contribution to Environmental Studies over the years has been significant, with many of our courses counting toward that major. Members of the department regularly serve as thesis advisers for Individually

Planned Majors. Nearly every member of the department has contributed one or more courses to interdisciplinary studies. We also continue to participate in the Theatre Department's requirements by team teaching and cross listing a two-semester course in Drama Literature every other year.

III. Student Assessment

A) Course Assessment

In our courses we use a combination of essay and research papers, exams, creative projects, and oral presentations to assess students' success. Success is indicated by their ability to analyze literary texts, to use the skills appropriate for particular genres, to go into depth in the questions they ask and the ways in which they answer them, to position texts within their historical context, and to synthesize critical materials with their own readings.

B) Assessment in the Major

Students who complete both the English Department course requirements and the oral and written comprehensive examinations required of English Majors emerge with the knowledge and skills one would expect of a Bachelor of Arts in English: they are capable of independent, sophisticated reading and analysis of works in the major genres of English and American literature; they are able to write clearly, persuasively, and eloquently; they know how to research a literary topic; they have a sense of literary history; they are able to present their ideas clearly in an oral presentation; and they have the critical vocabulary and stylistic abilities necessary to engage in productive dialogue with other readers and writers.

Comprehensive written and oral exams are used to assess our senior students' abilities to apply what they have learned. For written examinations, students choose three periods of literature from among the periods of English and American literature they have taken. The goal of these written exams is for students to show they are able to apply what they have learned to additional works they read from the periods and to write analytical essays on broad-ranging questions that encompass the important themes related to those periods.

Starting in the summer preceding their senior year, majors do extensive additional reading – guided by reading lists specific to each period of British and American Literature – in the three periods they have chosen. The works on the lists (distributed at the end of the junior year), are, for the most part, works they have not read in a classroom context, so they are required to demonstrate an ability to synthesize and organize new material. Majors often choose to prepare collaboratively with others taking the same exams.

Each written comprehensive examination is evaluated by at least two members of the English Department. In 2006-2007, after departmental discussion of the comprehensive examination process, we changed the written examination requirement from the selection of two British periods and one American period, to one British period, one American period, and one period, either British or American, of the student's choice, in order to increase student autonomy.

In the oral component of the comprehensive examination, each senior major is assigned a short work of literature – a poem, story, or play – upon which he or she takes a one-hour oral examination involving a twenty-minute presentation to a panel of three professors, followed by a question and answer session with the panel. The oral exam requires students to do independent analysis, to present that analysis persuasively (using only notes), and to engage in a vigorous discussion of both their analysis and the assigned work. This exam, then, tests not only analytical skills, but the ability of students to engage in interactive critical analysis.

Since the last accreditation, we have worked to ensure students have a solid understanding of the expectations of the major. To this end, we have created a web site for our majors which includes information useful for students taking the exams, and we have developed two detailed handbooks, one focusing on the major requirements and one focusing on the senior exam process. We also meet with students at the end of their junior year to review methods of preparation for the exams.

In addition to the measurement tools we use to ensure students are successful in mastering research skills, the ability of students to conduct sophisticated scholarship is demonstrated by the increasing number of students who, in the last ten years, have participated in student/faculty research supported by the college's Abshire and Perry awards. The academic excellence of our majors has been validated by their regularly receiving awards, such as the Watson, Goldwater, Beinecke, Fulbright, and Andrew W. Mellon Fellowships in the Humanities.

IV. Department Assessment and Appraisal

A) Recent Assessment and Changes

Over the last ten years, the English Major has remained between the third and the fifth largest major at Whitman. Since 1996, the number of our graduating seniors has ranged between twenty-two and thirty-seven seniors every year.

However, the faculty in the department have changed. In a nine position (ten person) department, only four members of the current department were here in 1996. In the last ten years, we have had six retirements and two resignations. Thus, after years of having little change in what we could offer our majors, we have had the opportunity to redeploy tenured faculty positions with each new job position to be filled. Each time a position was replaced, we examined how we might maintain our strengths, in particular the depth and range of our period and special topics/special authors course offerings, and at the same time make changes that reflect the dynamic nature of our field and the expanding literary canon, and that respond to student needs. This assessment led to the following changes in faculty:

First, over this ten-year period, in recognition of the important role creative writing plays in a literary studies program, and indeed does play in the literature program of many liberal arts colleges, we redefined two of our tenure-track positions as creative writing positions. At the beginning of this period we were only able to offer one creative writing class a year, making it impossible for students to do advanced work except in independent study courses taught on faculty overload. Having hired two faculty members who specialize in writing different genres, we now have a rich range of introductory, intermediate, advanced, and craft classes.

Second, recognizing changing trends in our discipline, and the academy in general, that incorporated new and underrepresented voices into the literary canon, we changed the job descriptions for our Twentieth Century British position to include emphasis on Post-Colonial Literature and added an Ethnic Literature component to one of our American Literature positions. This allowed us to increase our course offerings in Post-Colonial Literature and Race and Ethnic Studies. We have also maintained and reaffirmed the department's commitment to support our existing faculty's regular participation in, including their participation in the governance of, the Race and Ethnic Studies and Gender Studies majors.

In addition to reevaluating the vision of our program through new faculty, we have had an ongoing commitment to testing and developing new pedagogical approaches in our courses. This process includes both updating our skills in an ever-changing discipline and integrating new technologies into the classroom. For example, in response to a substantial shift in library technologies, a crucial element of literary research, the department sent a representative to the Summer 2003 Pacific Northwest Information Literacy Institute sponsored by Whitman's Penrose Library and funded by a grant from the Mellon Foundation. In May 2004, all members of the department attended a follow-up workshop led by the department representative and Head of Reference and Information Literacy, Lee Keene. The new knowledge acquired at this workshop has been integrated into both our *Approaches to the Study of Literature* courses and our *Junior/Senior Seminars*.

An increasing number of our faculty members have introduced new technologies into the classroom. Several members of the department have used Blackboard, and there are web pages for many of our courses available to our students. In addition, two members of the department were part of the test group for CLEo, an alternate course web site, and one has developed a class blog for one of her upper-division period courses. We are making increasing use of "smart" classrooms and have urged the Technology Center to develop more such classrooms in Olin Hall.

Pedagogical development is ongoing at multiple levels. Many faculty members regularly attend workshops offered by the Center for Teaching and Learning, and mentoring takes place at an individual level, with reciprocal classroom visits and constructive feedback. A number of faculty members are experimenting in literary courses with innovative teaching approaches that blend creative and analytical skills. Assignments that involve performance and creative writing have been used in some period and introductory courses to increase the variety of approaches to the text that students experience.

While variety in course offerings and course content is a valuable part of our program, the department identified a need for uniformity in the gateway and capstone courses we teach. Having observed that uneven skills were evident in student assessment, and having identified the origins of the problem in the tendency of different faculty members to place emphasis on different skills, faculty moved towards establishing consistent practices and requirements so that students taking any section of the course could be assured of receiving similar training. Faculty teaching the gateway and capstone courses, English 290 (*Approaches to the Study of Literature*) and English 491 (*Junior/Senior Seminar*), now collaborate with one another to a great extent in writing their syllabi and in coordinating assignments. Although each course retains its distinctive thematic nature, students can be sure of equity in the workload, the nature of the instruction, and the course requirements from one section to another.

B) Future Changes

In 2002, there was a change in distribution requirements at Whitman. Instead of requiring students to take seven of eight distribution areas, one of which was History and Literature, the faculty voted to create four distribution areas, no longer allowing students to skip an area, but allowing for greater freedom of choice within the newly created distribution areas of Social Sciences, Humanities, Fine Arts, and Science. There was concern within the English Department that this would have an impact upon our enrollments. In fact, there has been some change in enrollment patterns for 100-level courses. In the past, a significant number of the students taking our *Introduction to...* courses (Fiction, Poetry, and Drama) took those classes to fulfill their distribution requirements. When this distribution slot was no longer required, we were not surprised to find that we no longer had the same number of enrollments in those courses.

This was to be expected and has not necessarily been a bad thing. The students who now take those classes are genuinely interested in the subject matter and, in some cases, are considering the English Major. We continue to offer multiple sections every semester of our introductory genre courses. Moreover, our 181 and 182 theme courses are increasingly popular and often filled to capacity. The department is evaluating the shift in student interest to topic rather than genre courses, and may reconsider whether to adjust the balance of theme and genre courses in the future.

Faculty members hold meetings on a regular basis, and engage in ongoing reflection on and evaluation of the effectiveness of our program and our goals. We work to maintain our traditional strengths, but also adapt to reflect our discipline and our student needs. Our ongoing discussions have led to a number of significant changes in our offerings. Key changes include the following: First, to further increase student choice and to ensure regular representation of increasingly influential approaches to literature in scholarship among the department offerings, the English department has recently added two regular third-year courses beginning in 2007-2008. To introduce these important courses with the minimal effect on our current offerings, they will be offered in alternate years. The first is *Colonial and Anti-Colonial Literature* (English 376), which was added to give students increased access to the literature of Empire and its aftermath, a well-established, growing, and important part of literary studies. The second is *Literary Theory* (English 375), which will enable students to extend the introductory taste for theory they experienced in English 290 into a vibrant fluency, not only in the history of literary theory, but also in reading literary works through theoretical lenses. These courses may be taken as electives.

Second, the department concluded that the British period courses, because of substantial changes to the literary canon, were too sweeping to allow for in-depth textual analysis. In response, the department has

replaced the broad survey courses with *Studies in British Literature* period courses. The revised courses, to be offered beginning in Fall 2007, will be designed to examine particular questions, genres, and historical moments. This change will provide students a more in-depth sense of the period through a focused, rigorous course, and will allow faculty to use their expertise in the periods to determine the most effective way to teach their particular period.

Third, recognizing our commitment to the complementary relationship between creative writing and literary analysis, the department has approved a creative writing thesis option that will allow qualified students of exceptional promise to write a creative thesis. Discussion is ongoing about whether it would further enhance our program to offer a creative writing focus that would allow students a greater ability to specialize in the creative side of the program. As this decision might have significant staffing implications, the department has decided to evaluate the effectiveness of the new creative writing thesis option before making a decision on whether to consider a creative writing concentration.

The department plans to revisit the effectiveness of our changes on an ongoing basis, and work to redress any potential imbalances between majors' breadth and depth of knowledge. For example, having established greater focus and depth of knowledge in our new British period courses, we will be assessing whether we need a one-semester, second-year British Literature Survey course to provide increased breadth, and to prepare our students more successfully for period studies. This assessment will require reflection on what would be involved in constructing and staffing such a course on a regular basis, and how it might impact our current offerings and requirements.

Curricular changes and pedagogical shifts in our discipline have also led us to consider reevaluating the structure and content of our comprehensive exams. We want to ensure that the model of measurement we use continues to assess what we are teaching in the program. Alternate models have been discussed that suggest students be encouraged to do even more independent synthesis of materials or that a portion (or all) of the written component of the exams be genre based rather than period based. We will continue to assess these possibilities as we measure the effects of the changes we have implemented.

This is an exciting and productive time for the English Department. Our new faculty members bring their ideas and energy to the discussion of the major, and we are all enjoying the creative opportunities our new departmental community offers. Many possibilities are attractive, but all are complexly interconnected. Our current intent, as much as possible, is to make changes incrementally, letting each new piece fall into place as we open the way for our future development.

Accreditation Self-Study
Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures (FLL)

The Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures is one of the two largest departments in the division of humanities. We teach five modern foreign languages and literatures: Chinese, French, German, Japanese, and Spanish. We offer majors and minors in French, German and Spanish, minors in Chinese and Japanese, as well as a major in Asian studies, which requires at least two years of Chinese or Japanese and encourages the study of both of these languages. The recently approved major in Race and Ethnic Studies also requires two years of foreign language study at the college level. Spanish contributes to the Latin American Studies major with advanced language and literature courses in Spanish. The French and German professors regularly teach in the first-year Core.

There is one tenured, full professor in Chinese, a native of Taiwan and an American citizen. She is assisted in her language courses by a native speaker from Taiwan or China, who works as a full-time adjunct. The three tenure-track positions in French are currently staffed by a woman full professor and two married couples, both at the assistant professor level. Because of Whitman's frequent sabbatical program, French usually employs one or more adjuncts to teach grammar classes every year. There is only one tenure-track position in German, held by a full professor. Since 2005, however, there is a three-year, full-time, visiting assistant professor position that adds four classes in German language, literature, or culture to the German curriculum. There is also a part-time adjunct who teaches German language and, at times, literature. Japanese has one full-time, tenured professor and an adjunct, who is a native speaker of the language. Finally, Spanish has now expanded to four tenure-track positions, a full-time lecturer and a part-time adjunct. The three most recent hires are native speakers of Spanish.

The Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures is unified by a common philosophy, which stresses excellence in language pedagogy, dedication to the study of literature and the integration of culture into the study of language. We all strongly support study abroad and encourage our students to participate in semester or year-long programs. We make staffing and hiring decisions jointly and work together on the direction of the Language Learning Center and technology projects. In spite of the differences in our major requirements and teaching styles, we truly function as a single department sustained by mutual respect.

Accreditation Self-Study
Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures - Chinese

I. Goals of the Chinese Teaching Area

The Chinese teaching area does not have a major, but offers a Minor in Chinese Language and Literature, which requires 15 credits of Chinese language or literature courses beyond the intermediate level (Chinese 206 or its equivalent). The credits can be taken either on campus or from studies abroad. The program also serves as one of the two languages required (minimum two years) for the Asian Studies major. Consequently, the objectives of both programs overlap.

The major goal of the Chinese teaching area is to serve the two programs well by training the students to achieve adequate levels of Chinese language proficiency as well as by developing the students' critical understanding of Chinese literature and culture. The teaching area aims to ensure that the students, after two minimal years of language training, are able to communicate basic information with native speakers in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Their communicative abilities improve further with more advanced language courses either at home or abroad. In the literature courses, students study Chinese culture through analytical reading of literary texts. In an era of increasing globalization, the Chinese teaching area strives to prepare our students to fulfill Whitman's mission of "fostering intellectual vitality, personal confidence, leadership, and the flexibility to deal with a changing multicultural world." The teaching area's goals have remained stable since its creation in 1985.

II. Description of the Chinese Teaching Area

A. Curriculum

1. Language courses

Beginning Chinese, (Chinese 105-106)

Intermediate Chinese, (Chinese 205-206)

Advanced Chinese, (Chinese 305-306)

These are 4-credit courses which meet 4 hours in class per week. Outside of class, small groups of 2 to 3 students meet with native speaking tutors for oral drills for 30 minutes per week. The students also listen to audio tapes, DVDs at the Language Learning Center, or use "Cleo" via the internet when they do the workbook exercises for each chapter.

Since fall 1998, Prof. Wei-Peng has adopted a new textbook, *Integrated Chinese*, written and edited by Professor Tao-chung Yao and others and published in 1997. Level 1, Part 1 of the series is used for *Beginning Chinese*, supplemented by its *Workbook* and *Character Workbook*. Level 1, Part 2 is the text used for *Intermediate Chinese* and Level 2 is the text for *Advanced Chinese*.

The emphasis in *Beginning Chinese* has been on pronunciation and tones, as well as on reading and writing of characters. For pronunciation and tones, Prof. Wei-Peng continues to use Chinese nursery rhymes in class as fun practice, but she has cut the original ten rhymes to five after determining that the new textbook is better designed for drills than the former one used for this class. To help the students remember the characters, she continues to explain the origin of or create a story for every character. For *Intermediate Chinese*, the focus is on vocabulary and sentence structures. The students are also required to make five-minute oral presentations four to five times each semester. *Advanced Chinese* as a regular course offering started in 2004. Oral presentations of five minutes are bi-weekly practices in class. Students at this level are required to understand readings of complex sentence structures and of idiomatic expressions.

Conversational Chinese I, ("Chinese 110" — summer program — please see below)

Conversational Chinese II, ("Chinese 210"— summer program)

Launched in 2001, these are two language courses designed for the “Whitman Summer Studies in China” program, which was made possible by an endowment. The program, offered every other year, is located in Kunming, China, and the courses are taught by selected faculty at Yunnan University. Prerequisites for these 4-credit courses include: 1.) Successful completion of the second semester of *Beginning Chinese* (106) for placement in Chinese 110 in China and successful completion of the second semester of *Intermediate Chinese* (206) for placement in Chinese 210 in China; and 2.) Admission to the summer program.

In order to efficiently facilitate these 4-week intensive courses, Prof. Wei-Peng co-wrote with Professor Chen Xin from Yunnan University two textbooks, *Talks about Yunnan*, Book I and Book II. Book I originally had 20 chapters, designed for the study of one chapter per day. After two years of experiment, Prof. Wei-Peng revised these materials by deleting four chapters in order to leave the fifth day of the week for review. She also shortened each chapter so that the students can spend less time on vocabulary and more time on oral practice. Book II remains unrevised because the students at this level seem to handle these materials well.

Chinese Independent Study, (Chinese 391-392)

These are courses of 1 to 4 credits each semester designed for students who wish to continue their language study beyond 206 (prior to fall 2004) and beyond 306 (after the inauguration of that 3rd year level class in fall 2004). Typical students at this level are returnees from studies abroad. Because they are usually at varied levels of proficiency, it is difficult to put more than two students in a group. Materials are selected to fit each student's individual needs. Because it is an overload for her, Prof. Wei-Peng offers it as a 2-credit course with a one-hour class meeting time per week.

In the spring of 2005, Prof. Wei-Peng was able to put 6 students and one auditor into one group to study *Classical Chinese*. They met once a week for 1 ½ hours for 2 credits. The textbook used was *Writings of the Dragon*, compiled and edited by Gregory Chiang. The class covered one chapter per week, studying the vocabulary, sentence structures, literary meaning of the texts, and their philosophical implications.

2. Literature Courses

One literature course is offered each semester from the following pool: *Chinese Poetry*, *Chinese Folk Literature*, *Classical Chinese Drama*, *Modern Chinese Literature*, and *Myth, Folktale and Children's Literature*. *Chinese Poetry* is the only course that has a prerequisite of at least one semester of Chinese, or one year of Japanese, or by the instructor's consent. This course uses original Chinese texts whenever possible, but discussions and papers are conducted in English. All the other literature courses are conducted in English with readings in translation and are open to all without prerequisites. Since the 1997 accreditation report, *Introduction to Asian Civilization* has been dropped because a new hire in Art History and Asian Studies was assigned to teach *Introduction to Asian Studies* as the “gateway” requirement for that major. In spring 2005, *The Story of the Stone* was offered as a special topics course.

All the literature courses are taught in the seminar style. The students are required to participate in discussions, present oral reports and write 3 to 4 papers. Textual analysis and critical reading are emphasized in these courses in order to enhance student understanding of Chinese culture and appreciation of Chinese literature.

B. Faculty

Since its creation in 1985, the Chinese teaching area has been taught by one full-time faculty member. When Prof. Wei-Peng was on leave taking students to China with the Associated China Program during the school year 1998-99 and when she was on sabbatical leave during 2003-04, full-time replacements were hired (a Chinese Canadian Assistant Professor for 1998/99 and an Instructor from China for 2003-04). In 2000-01 and 2001-02, a teaching assistant from Yunnan University in China was hired for each year to help Prof. Wei-Peng with the language classes. In 2004-05, a visiting instructor from Taiwan was hired to teach *Advanced Chinese* as well as one section of *Beginning Chinese*. In 2005-06 a visiting lecturer from Taiwan was hired to teach one

section of *Beginning Chinese* and *Advanced Chinese*. For 2006-07, another visiting instructor was hired to teach one section of *Beginning Chinese* and *Advanced Chinese*. For spring 2007, a second visiting instructor was hired to take over Professor Wei-Peng's *Intermediate Chinese* so as to free enough time for Professor Wei-Peng to offer *Chinese Independent Study* sessions to students returning from studies abroad.

C. Enrollments

1. Language Courses

Enrollments in the language courses were low—in single digits in all levels—until 2001. However, the retention rate was high during these years and resulted in between 5 and 10 students each year asking for advanced study beyond *Intermediate Chinese* (206). Starting in fall 2004, *Advanced Chinese* has been offered as a regular course to answer student needs.

In fall 2001, suddenly there were 28 students enrolled in *Beginning Chinese*. This number was followed by 16 in 2002, 15 in 2003, and 24 in 2004. Then, a dramatic number of 38 students enrolled in *Beginning Chinese* in fall 2005 and two sections were offered. In fall 2006, two sections of *Beginning Chinese* were again offered to accommodate 41 students.

2. Literature Courses

Enrollments in the Chinese literature courses are consistently around ten students each, which is a good size for their seminar style. The only exception is *Myth, Folktale and Children's Literature*, which is offered as a world literature (or comparative literature) course as its material is not exclusively Chinese and thus does not count toward the Chinese minor or the Asian Studies Major. This course had not been offered for ten years, but when it was offered for fall, 2006, a waiting list had to be created for an enrollment limit of 20 during pre-registration.

D. Future Plans

The employment of a 2/3 time language instructor to teach one section of *Beginning Chinese* and *Advanced Chinese* will have to be extended to a fulltime position starting fall 2007 and this employment should be stabilized. We plan to hire Ms. Wencui Zhao, from China, to fill this position because of her outstanding performance as Professor Wei-Peng's 2003/4 sabbatical replacement.

Judging from the fact that the State Department and the Department of Defense have worked together with the Chinese government to launch Chinese programs in the primary and secondary schools nationwide starting 2005, Professor Wei-Peng anticipates increased enrollments at the advanced levels in three years. By then, we will need a 4th-year language class in order to meet the needs of prospective students.

In the area of literature course offerings, Prof. Wei-Peng plans to change the *Children's Literature* course into a *Chinese Children's Literature* course. She received a Whitman "Perry Grant" for summer research (2006) to take two students to Hong Kong and China to direct them in a project to collect children's literature materials. After the material is collected, Prof. Wei-Peng will translate some of it into English to make this new course a reality.

In the area of special topics courses, the students reacted enthusiastically to the reading and discussion of *The Story of the Stone* in spring 2005 and suggested offering it as a regular course. Prof. Wei-Peng will consider this suggestion for the future as she plans literature courses and materials.

III. Assessment of the Academic Program in Chinese and Its Effectiveness

In the language courses, students are given two vocabulary quizzes and a chapter exam for each chapter covered. The vocabulary quizzes are designed for the students to familiarize themselves with the reading while the chapter is being studied. The chapter exam always has a listening component, a short passage for reading comprehension and a composition topic for writing. The courses require a final exam that covers the material of

the semester. This assessment method has proved quite adequate in evaluating the student achievement in the areas of listening, reading, and writing. The students have to study hard and understand the course material thoroughly in order to earn good grades. Speaking is practiced daily in class and weekly in small group drills although it is not tested on the chapter exam. In fact, if the students understand the questions given orally, they are effectively trained to respond with clear pronunciation.

Students who went on to study abroad after one or two years of Chinese at Whitman performed very well in the placement tests for all the programs abroad to which they applied. They and their study abroad instructors have always reported their satisfaction with the solid training they received at Whitman. Whitman students of Chinese find themselves strong in comparison to students from comparable and higher ranked colleges in the United States. Students who attend graduate schools in the field of Asian Studies or Chinese Studies have been admitted into top institutions such as Harvard, Columbia, Tufts, UC San Diego, the University of Washington, etc.

In the literature courses, students are required to participate in class discussions, present oral reports, and submit written papers. The instructor does not assign paper topics; rather part of the training is that the students find a workable topic. The students then discuss their topics individually with the instructor. In one semester, a student typically writes 4 papers of 4-5 pages each or 3 papers of 6-8 pages each in these courses. The papers are evaluated for their critical analyses of and insight into the texts as well as organization of argument and writing skills. Outstanding papers have been accepted for presentations at the Undergraduate Conferences on campus and at other intercollegiate conferences.

Because of Whitman students' Chinese proficiency and/or knowledge of classical Chinese Drama, four of them were awarded an AsianNetwork Freeman Fellowship to study Chinese Kunqu performance in Beijing for a month in the summer of 2002 under the directorship of Prof. Wei-Peng. They also staged a Kunqu play in English at the Harper Joy Theater on the Whitman campus. This experience also enabled Prof. Wei-Peng to enhance the performance aspect of her teaching of *Classical Chinese Drama*. Another student received a Whitman Abshire Award for one semester to research classical Chinese stage performance. Two other students received a Whitman Perry Grant to complete a research project on folktales and children's literature in Hong Kong and China during summer 2006, with Prof. Wei-Peng

IV. Assessment and Appraisal of the Chinese Teaching Area and Its Future

As indicated from the description and assessment above, the Chinese teaching area has performed steadily and satisfactorily toward its goals. The students have demonstrated their abilities to work and compete with their peers from other institutions in the areas of Chinese language, literature and culture in the United States and abroad, an indication that they are actively participating in the globalizing multicultural community. Of course, there is always room to make the students better ambassadors to China. Improvement of the students' aural and oral proficiency is one area on which we can focus. To implement this effort, we need a functional Language Learning Center and ours is currently in a state of transition since the death of its Director in 2005. The Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures as a whole is working on a plan to define and fill this administrative and programming vacancy.

With the anticipated increase in enrollments in the Chinese language classes, we will need to hire a full-time second faculty member in fall 2007 and a full-time third faculty in 2008. Being a one-person teaching area has been the greatest challenge of this program. The faculty member has been forced to offer independent studies to students who wished to have further study of Chinese and that situation creates a teaching overload. In spring 2003, for example, Professor WeiPeng had to drop her literature course in order to take care of a large number of students asking to take independent study of advanced Chinese. Not offering literature courses is an academic sacrifice on the part of the faculty specifically and expertly trained in this area and a disservice to the Asian Studies Major since it reduces the elective courses for those students. The only solution to this problem is to hire two more full-time faculty members, which is now certainly justified by the increasing student enrollments and interest in Asian and Chinese Studies.

Accreditation Self-Study
Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures - French

Goals and Objectives

The French section of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures supports the overall mission of Whitman College through the study of language, literature, history and culture. Our main goals are to teach students to communicate in French and to analyze and interpret texts in a manner that encourages critical thinking. To these ends we insist upon the use of French in all of our classes, from the first day of beginning French through the oral examination that concludes the senior experience. Outside of class, we address our students in French during casual encounters in hallways, the library, residences and student restaurants. When our students graduate from Whitman, we expect them to understand written and oral French, to speak colloquial French in a recognizable accent and to be able to write French that is grammatically correct and uses current vocabulary. More and more, we incorporate technological skills, such as web searches, filmmaking and film editing, into language study in order to give our students practical communication skills for our changing technological world. We strongly encourage study abroad, both in France and in Francophone countries, so that students can perfect their French and experience first-hand life in a foreign culture. It is our belief that American students who succeed in expressing their ideas in French invariably reconsider these ideas, test them and criticize them in ways monolingual students cannot. Moreover, the study of a foreign language, especially French with its tradition of intellectual rigor and its cultural status, fosters intellectual vitality and personal confidence. Given the new economic and political importance of the European Union, the knowledge of French also paves the way for students to work in one of the world's most exciting contemporary cultures. All of our literature classes are multidisciplinary in focus and combine the study of texts with that of history, art, film or philosophy. While we consider ourselves the guardians of the European intellectual traditions, we also incorporate in our curriculum the post-colonial perspective that challenges the Enlightenment. We thus provide a comprehensive course of study that immerses our majors and minors in French and prepares them for life in a multicultural world.

History of the French Program from 1997-2006

A comparison between the 1997 and 2006 descriptions of the French curriculum in the College Catalog could give the impression that there has been little change in the French classes offered over the past ten years. We have retained the structure of two-semester sequences in the beginning, intermediate and advanced language classes and of advanced literature courses in all centuries of French literature from the Middle Ages through the twentieth century. However, within this framework, we have made changes at every level. In 2000, we adopted a textbook, *Paroles*, for French 105-106 (*Beginning French*) that uses Internet technology and encourages communicative activities. The textbook for the intermediate courses, French 205-206, stresses contemporary French culture in combination with the study of grammar, vocabulary and reading. *Advanced French* has been divided into two tracks. We offer French 305-306, a sequence that provides students with a final exposure to grammar and composition but also attempts to increase fluency in speaking and reading comprehension. There are two other courses offered at the third-year level. An *Introduction to French Literature*, which is required of all minors, introduces students to French literary analysis. *Contemporary France*, a course on culture and civilization, concentrates on the development of French political and social institutions. This course has become very popular with students preparing for study abroad. The two latter courses began as 200-level courses but were changed to the 300 level to reflect their difficulty, which is equivalent to that of the advanced grammar courses.

At present, a student who has already studied French in high school takes an on-line placement test in French and is enrolled, after consideration is given both to the score on the placement test and the number of years of previous study, in the appropriate level. Students who have had as little as two years of French are seldom allowed to take beginning French, a level reserved for those who have never studied the language or have had only one year in high school. More students place into *Intermediate French* than into *Advanced French*,

although over the past ten years we have gotten increasingly larger numbers of students with very strong backgrounds, for whom French 305 or 306 is appropriate. Only students with very strong language skills are allowed to take French 315, *Introduction to French Literature*, especially since many upper-division students, including students returning from study abroad, take this class. French 316, *Contemporary France*, offers an alternative to students uninterested in grammar study. We have revised the French requirements so that students must take two classes at the 300 level, and these classes do not have to be taken in sequence, before entering literature classes rather than entering literature classes after the intermediate 206 course, as was possible before. This change in requirements gives students some choice in their program and provides flexibility for students going abroad but still ensures that students have adequate preparation before undertaking literature courses.

In 2004, we changed the numbering of our literature courses from the 300 to the 400 level to indicate the difficulty of these classes. The titles of these courses—*French Literature of the Middle Ages, Renaissance, Seventeenth, Eighteenth, Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*—indicate that they are all surveys of French literature. The focus of these surveys and the books taught in them has changed considerably over the past ten years and now include literary criticism, new historical perspectives, a consideration of literary movements and comparisons with the fine arts. French minors are required to take at least one advanced literature course. Although French majors must only complete 28 credits in French beyond the second year and are allowed to count credits from study abroad and the third-year classes taught at Whitman, the average French major takes many more literature classes than required. It is not uncommon for a major who began literature classes in the sophomore year and who has not studied abroad to take all eight advanced literature courses. While we would like to think that our majors take so many courses because of their love of French and the French faculty, they probably do so to prepare for the senior examinations, which require them to prepare a long reading list that includes numerous works from each century of French literature. Since the reading list is based on the texts studied in the literature classes, the most efficient way for students to prepare for the examination is to take the classes. The senior examinations also make it necessary for the French faculty to provide independent studies every semester in the literature classes that students have missed while studying abroad. Every French faculty member teaches at least one independent study a year and, often, several.

French majors must also take two courses in World Literature in Translation. These courses were originally conceived as complements to the French major and were often surveys of world literature that stressed or at least included French literature. However, the world literature offerings have changed radically over the past ten years. We no longer offer any survey courses in European literature and French students are as likely to fulfil the requirement with a course in cinema or culture as with one on a single French author. Since students can also count courses taken on study abroad as world literature, they often do not take advantage of the Whitman world literature offerings at all. We are currently reconsidering the world literature requirement, which may be reduced to one course or simply to an option. The French faculty still regularly contributes one course in world literature each semester. Our latest offerings include the study of French cinema, literary theory and Caribbean literature, exciting new courses that we will counsel our majors to take whether or not we retain the world literature requirement.

The culmination of the French major is the senior examination. In principle, majors have been reading the books on the reading list, which changes slightly from year to year, since their junior year. At the beginning of the senior year, we meet with the seniors for lunch to arrange the dates and procedures for the written examinations, which usually take place over three days, from 9 a.m. until noon each day, immediately after spring break at the end of March. We especially encourage the students to work together, to pool their knowledge of different centuries and authors in the weeks immediately preceding the examination, and to consult their teachers. As a result, the students are normally very well prepared. No one has failed the written examination in the past five years. After passing the written examination, each student has an hour-long oral examination in French, during which the French faculty can ask questions about any work on the reading list. If students can demonstrate that they have done the reading and can analyze the works on which they are

being questioned, they pass the oral. If, in the course of the oral, it becomes obvious that a student has not read the work, the oral exam ends. The student must complete the reading and demonstrate an understanding of the text in a second oral exam given at least one week later. Students are more likely to fail the oral exam than the written, since they have a choice of questions on the written exam and can work around any deficiencies, but they cannot do so on the oral, where the teachers choose the questions. While most students pass the oral exam on the first try, it is not uncommon for a student to retake the oral exam. Students are awarded the grades “pass” or “pass with distinction” on the senior examination. For those students attempting to graduate with honors in French, they must pass the senior examinations, written and oral, with distinction and write a thesis in French on a literary subject. Relatively few French majors write theses because of the difficulty of preparing the major examination. The French faculty has considered changing from an examination to a senior thesis but has rejected the idea mainly because our majors tell us every year that they find the examination a worthwhile and even exhilarating experience that builds cooperation among the majors and allows them to make connections between different centuries of French literature. Students with double majors, or even those who do not feel prepared to take the senior exams in March are often allowed to take them the following fall semester or even during the summer. We allow this flexibility because we want to give our students the best chance possible of passing their exams.

Study abroad is an important element of the French major at Whitman College. Most of our majors spend at least one semester in France, usually on the IES programs in Nantes or Paris. Whitman normally has more students in Nantes than any other American college, to the point that the IES faculty in Nantes has developed classes in seventeenth-century literature and modern drama that cover the same material offered at Whitman, so that Whitman French majors can work on their reading lists while in Nantes. Since students are obliged to take an advanced language course abroad, they often skip at least one semester of our 305-306 sequence at Whitman and complete their language study in France. The French minor is very popular in large part because of study abroad, and minors can take the advanced literature class required for the minor in France rather than at Whitman. Because the classes offered in France usually count for three credits, instead of the four credits given for all Whitman French courses except independent studies, we have changed the requirements for the minor from twenty credits, excluding independent study, to a minimum of eighteen credits excluding independent study. In this way, students can take two classes abroad and three classes, one of which must be French 315, *Introduction to Literature*, at Whitman to complete the minor. Before we changed the number of credits for the minor from 20 to 18, minors often had to take two advanced literature classes at Whitman their senior year to obtain the necessary credits. We believe that the change in credits is not only fairer to our minors but also accords due importance to the experience of living and studying in France. During the past few years, students have expressed an interest in studying in a Francophone African country. The Study Abroad Committee is currently considering programs in Senegal, although, to date, we have not found a program that offers adequate classes in advanced French language or literature.

French students can also take advantage of French activities outside of the classroom. They can live for one or two semesters in the Whitman College French House where they speak French at one meal a day and can participate in cultural activities. Every year a native speaker of French lives in the French House and is available for conversation in French. The French Table meets twice a month for conversation between students, faculty and French-speaking members of the Walla Walla community. French films are regularly shown on campus. In the fall of 2005, there was a French film festival co-sponsored by the Penrose Library and the French Cultural Services. For over ten years, we have also participated in the English Assistantship Program sponsored by the French Ministry of Education, which pays American students to teach English in French elementary and secondary schools for eight months. At least twenty Whitman graduates have participated in this program since 1997.

From 1997 until 2002 the French faculty consisted of three full professors, two men and one woman, and one full-time adjunct who served either as sabbatical replacement or as a replacement for course releases in faculty governance, the editorship of the journal *Philosophy and Literature*, and in the first-year Core. In 2002 and 2003

the two senior French professors took early retirement. They have been replaced by two married couples, each of which shares a single tenure-track position. One couple both have PhDs in French from Princeton University and the other couple both have PhDs in French from the University of Chicago. The Department of Foreign Languages decided on the shared positions for several reasons: the two couples were the best candidates who applied for the positions; since most new Whitman faculty members have a spouse or partner looking for work in Walla Walla, job-sharing gives work to both spouses and provides an incentive for these teachers to remain at Whitman; because couples can teach more than the normal load of six classes per tenure-track position, shared positions can reduce the need for adjuncts or sabbatical replacements. The four new people in French are able to cover all centuries of French literature that have been taught traditionally in our department, but they also bring new expertise in literary theory, cinema, technology, Francophone culture and literature, and history, as well as the possibility of expanding and renovating our curriculum. Both couples also participate in the first-year Core program and have shown interest in participating and helping form multi-disciplinary programs. The department feels that it is fortunate to have these new hires. The third tenure-track position in French is still filled by the woman full professor. While we have been able to reduce our dependence on adjuncts, we still need adjuncts to cover sections of elementary or intermediate language classes, especially during a year like 2005-2006, when more than one French teacher is on sabbatical.

French enrollments have held steady over the past ten years. We have been able to offer two sections of beginning and intermediate language each semester, although very often in the second semester one beginning section has fewer than ten students. A study of enrollment patterns and class rosters suggest that there are two reasons for this change in enrollment from fall to spring. Many junior and senior students take only the fall semester of beginning French to fill in their academic schedules before going abroad to a non-French speaking country in the spring, and students who only begin French at Whitman are sometimes counseled by their pre-major advisors to drop the study of language because there is no language requirement at Whitman and they have other requirements to fulfill! Interest in French 305, *Advanced French*, has risen steadily over the past seven years, to the point that we have decided to offer an extra section of 305 in the fall 2006 and only one section of the second half of *Elementary French* in the spring 2007. We will thus teach ten classes in the fall and only eight in the spring, a change we can make because of the flexibility in scheduling afforded by the shared positions. French 315, *Introduction to French Literature*, usually enrolls 10-15 students, as does French 316, *Contemporary France*. The upper-division literature courses attract almost exclusively French majors and minors. They seldom enroll more than ten students and sometimes as few as four. Given that Whitman has no language requirement and that the French program is rigorous, French has done well to maintain its numbers during the past ten years. The change in the distribution requirements for graduation, instituted six years ago, may have a negative effect on the French program. Previously, a whole category of the distribution requirements was given to the study of language, rhetoric, and writing, and many students chose to fulfill this requirement with a foreign language. Under the new system, foreign languages and literatures are only two of the many areas that qualify for the humanities' distribution requirement of only two courses. Upper-division courses in foreign language and literature can be used to fulfill the distribution area in Alternative Voices, but, here again, foreign languages are in competition with dozens of other courses offered in the humanities and social sciences. While some of the French faculty members feel that a language requirement would expose more students to French and, thereby, interest them in advanced study, others believe that a language requirement would reduce us to the status of a service department. The French faculty is already working to offer new classes at the third-year and advanced levels that will attract more majors and minors. However, we will still appeal to relatively few students, only those who make the effort to learn French well enough to read, write and speak in it. All of our French teachers are strongly committed to such excellence in the French language.

The students who major in French usually fell in love with the language in high school and want to make it an important part of their lives. Our job is to imbue them with the French intellectual tradition as well as to show them the relevance of France and the French language in the contemporary world. French often attracts diverse students. In 2002, of the four graduating French majors, one was Korean-American, one Native

American, and one Vietnamese. We hope to attract even more diverse students with our new courses on the Francophone world. While French majors are overwhelmingly female, there is normally at least one male in each graduating class. Since 1997, we have sent French majors to Ph.D. programs at the top-ranked universities of the United States—the University of Michigan, Princeton, the University of Pennsylvania—and they have all received lucrative fellowships. Many of our graduates pursue careers in the health sciences in nursing, medicine, and veterinary medicine, and many also become secondary school teachers. For the first time, in the 2005-2006 academic year, four of our six graduating majors were double majors. If they represent the start of a new trend, we may see a considerable increase in the number of students who decide on a French major after study abroad.

Assessment

Students are assessed at the end of each class through examinations or papers. Although there is currently no official mid-program assessment, in fact study abroad serves the function of such an assessment: if students are able to study in a French university, they have successfully learned the basics of the language and culture; if they are not qualified for study abroad, they usually terminate their study of French. The IES study abroad centers in Nantes and Paris regularly report that Whitman French students place into the highest level of language study that each center offers. Moreover, our students regularly receive high grades during their study abroad and are normally able to attend classes in French universities. The senior examinations also provide us with an excellent means of assessing student performance at the end of their undergraduate career. The fact that we send a high percentage of French majors to graduate school is a testimony to the effectiveness of these examinations. We also have an unusually high percentage of majors who are accepted by the Peace Corps to work in Francophone Africa and the United States diplomatic service because of their excellent language skills. We have considered further tools for assessing the improvement in language ability that our students have made from their first to their senior years. One possibility we are considering is having them retake the placement test for a comparison of their initial and final scores. Another is the administration of a standardized exit test, the DELF. However, a teacher must be certified by the French Ministry of Education to administer the DELF, and, at present, no French faculty member is qualified to do so.

Since the arrival of our four new faculty members, we have engaged in an ongoing assessment of the French curriculum. We have examined enrollment data and consulted with whole classes as well as individual students in an effort to determine how we can serve their interests as well as give them an excellent education appropriate for undergraduates. We have decided to implement changes in stages, beginning with the minor requirements and admission to 400-level courses. These changes will undoubtedly continue for several years, as the new French faculty establish themselves.

Future Plans

The French section of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures is in a period of transition. In the immediate future we plan to make changes to all areas of the curriculum. We recognize that our third-year language classes have the most immediate need of revision. Few American universities offer two full semesters of advanced grammar study past the intermediate level, and all programs abroad require advanced language study. We might better serve our students by offering one semester of intensive grammar study and using the second semester as an introduction to French cinema or Francophone literature, or by beginning the language sequence with a conversation course and moving the intensive grammar class to the second semester.

Our literature sequence must also be changed to make room for upper-division classes in cinema and Francophone literature. At present, French cinema is only taught in World Literature in Translation, whereas the Spanish section already offers courses in Spanish and Latin American cinema in Spanish every semester. We do teach Francophone texts in the 300-level *Contemporary France* and in the twentieth-century novel, theater and poetry classes, but we do not spend nearly enough time on these works. The simplest solution would be to reduce the two-semester nineteenth and twentieth-century literature sequences to one semester each and to use the two semesters we gain for cinema and Francophone literature. It may also be time,

however, to consider changing our survey courses to topic-based courses, such as Renaissance prose or the realist novel, as German has done. Any change in the curriculum will necessarily involve a change in the reading list for majors and, perhaps, a change in the examination structure. We are already considering the possibility of giving majors a choice of the areas on which they will be tested and requiring them to take classes in the centuries they have not chosen. Revising the senior examinations would also relieve the burden of independent studies, which eat up the time of the French faculty.

The French faculty is actively engaged in changing the Language Learning Center from a simple meeting place where students can check their email to a technology center, where students can learn to make and edit film or digital audio recordings, do word processing in foreign languages and work with native speakers on grammar and conversation. We have already re-written the job description of our student employees to attract students interested both in foreign language and in technology. It is our hope that these students will receive valuable training that will enhance their experience at Whitman and give them practical skills.

Finally, we are rethinking the use of our French native speaker. For the past seven years, we have gotten our native speaker from the French Embassy's placement service. All of these young French men and women have been students of English and have often been unable to help the instructors in the language classroom because they have never studied their own language. For the 2006-2007 academic year we have hired an older student from the University of Nantes, who was recommended by the IES director and whose main interest is teaching French to foreigners. It is our hope that this native speaker will be able to tutor Whitman French students and be an active force in the language classroom.

Accreditation Self-Study
Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures – German Studies

Program Goals

The primary goal of the German teaching area at Whitman College is to enable students to understand, interpret and critique the culture of the German-speaking world. Some of the component parts of this goal would be to give students:

- the linguistic skills that they need to read, write, and converse in German;
- a basic understanding of the fundamentals of the culture, literature and history of the German-speaking world;
- the conceptual skills necessary to navigate through German culture;
- and the ability to convey their understanding of German culture in both English and German, relying on good evidence and sound reasoning.

The faculty in the German teaching area believe that these goals contribute to the overall mission of the College in numerous ways, specifically:

- The College's mission statement stresses *rigorous learning and scholarship*, which our program requires by demanding that our students learn a second language, work with original texts in that language, and interpret and explain those documents lucidly.
- The College mentions *character and responsibility* in its mission statement. Given the central importance of the Holocaust and the World Wars in modern German culture, we believe that our students must confront issues of character and responsibility in a distinctive way in almost all of the classes that we teach.
- The College's mission statement also promises that Whitman students *develop capacities to analyze, interpret, criticize, communicate, and engage*. In deciphering and translating the meaning of German words and texts, our students must analyze and interpret. In speaking or writing about those documents, they must criticize, communicate and engage their audience or reader, both in German and in English.
- The closing words of the College's mission statement refer to a *multicultural world*. By studying a foreign culture, our students not only learn about a world outside the Anglophone universe, but they also learn about the diversity within the German tradition. Many of our courses deal explicitly with multiculturalism in Germany today, the German-Jewish heritage, and issues of class, gender and sexuality in German culture.

General Description of Program

German Studies Orientation:

Our program has changed significantly since the 1997 accreditation, as the stated goals show. In 1997, we saw our primary objectives as teaching students to read, write, speak and understand German and teaching students to analyze texts from all major periods of German literary history. Under future possibilities, we indicated that we were examining the feasibility of developing a German area studies program. In the intervening ten years, we have evolved into a German Studies program. Our core faculty are still intellectually based in literary studies, we still require two upper-level literature courses, and students who wish to pursue a traditional German literature major may still do so within the context of German Studies, but we no longer focus our upper-level courses exclusively on training students in the interpretation of canonical German texts. While all students must still exhibit proficiency in German language skills, most students appreciate the freedom to investigate German culture from a broad interdisciplinary perspective, rather than concentrating exclusively on German literature. An exclusive focus on German literature is probably too narrow, given Whitman College's relatively small student body and the large number of students from the Pacific Northwest, who are increasingly focused on the Pacific Rim and Latin America. By expanding to German Studies, we are following in the trend of most liberal arts colleges, which also offer German Studies programs now. Major German academic institutions, such as the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (German Academic

Exchange Service) are also committed to the development of German Studies programs. In addition, we believe that by offering a German Studies program, we are better serving the mission of the College, as we are encouraging and enabling more students to study another culture from a variety of perspectives, not just the literary historical one.

Staffing and Course Offerings:

The staffing of the German program has also changed considerably since the last accreditation. One tenured faculty member retired and his position was not renewed, primarily because of low enrollments. So there is now one full-time tenured faculty member and one part-time adjunct faculty member. Because of sabbaticals, teaching opportunities in other departments such as gender studies and general studies, and course reductions due to service to the College, the teaching area was able to hire a visiting professor for 2004-5 and 2005-6, and will be able to do so for 2006-7 and 2007-8. The tenured faculty member teaches some of the only regularly offered courses in gay and lesbian studies on the campus, and the visiting professor teaches some of the only courses focusing on Jewish culture and the Holocaust on campus.

The program is able to offer a total of five courses a semester: (1) *Beginning German*, (2) *Intermediate German*, (3) *Advanced German*, (4) *German Literature and Culture in German*, and (5) *German Literature and Culture in English*.

We strive to introduce a high level of intellectual content into all of our language courses. For instance, the advanced German course often focuses on contemporary literature in the fall and provides a survey of short texts in German literary texts in the spring. Among our regularly offered literature courses is one on multiculturalism in the German tradition, focusing on German-Jewish and German-Turkish literatures. In our English-language courses, we try to make sure to offer courses on the Holocaust and the German-Jewish tradition, as well as film courses. This range of courses allows us to take care of all levels of German language ability, provide training in upper-level German literature, and reach out to students who do not have German-language abilities.

In addition, we have established a category of "affiliated faculty," who are from other departments but regularly teach courses that are of interest to students in German Studies. These include: a professor of music whose music history courses focus on German composers; a professor of art history whose research and upper-level courses focus on German artists; two professors of philosophy whose research and upper-level courses focus on German philosophers; a professor of history who regularly teaches German history; and a professor of religion whose research and upper-level courses deal with German protestant theology.

Besides these faculty, there has also been a constant stream of visiting faculty whose courses on the Holocaust, German-Jewish culture, European culture and the European Union enrich our curriculum. When one considers that students also have the possibility of taking a broad variety of courses while studying abroad, it is clear that there are many possibilities available to the students in the area of German Studies.

In some ways, the loss of the second tenure-track line has forced and accelerated beneficial changes in the German program: it has required the program to reach out to other faculty at the College who are involved in German Studies and to work aggressively to promote interest in German in the student body. On the other hand, it does put the burden of running a major program on one tenure-track and one part-time, non-tenure-track faculty member, which does put constraints on the program, in terms of the breadth of offerings it can provide and the depth of support it can offer students, especially when the tenure-track faculty member is on sabbatical. The staffing situation in German will require monitoring over the next decade to determine whether bringing back the second tenure-track line is warranted and/or whether the program can continue with current staffing.

The Major and Minor:

The major has also changed significantly since the last accreditation. The major consists of 36 credits, including:

- *Senior Thesis* (4 credits)
- 16 credits in German at the 300 level or above
- Either German 205/206 (8 credits) or 4 additional credits at the 300 level
- 8-12 additional credits taken either in German above the 300 level or in German Studies courses at the 200 level or above

The most significant point in this program is that second-year German now counts for the major, whereas before it had been preparatory. This is a response to the reality that relatively few students are exposed to German in high school, which means that very few students arrive with the background to begin a German major that doesn't count intermediate-level language courses.

In practical terms, this means that a student arriving with little or no preparation in German would typically take the following courses: 2nd year German, 3rd year German, 2 German literature courses, 2 additional courses either in German literature or in German studies, and senior thesis. The student arriving with more advanced skills would have more flexibility and could take 3rd year German, 3 courses in German literature, 3 additional courses either in German literature or German studies, and senior thesis. We believe that this arrangement gives students of varying backgrounds the ability to major in German Studies and offers students flexibility to tailor the program to meet their interests. At the same time, it requires extensive practice in language and results in a significant scholarly enterprise.

The minor requires 12 credits in German at the 300 level or above, plus 8 credits either in German at the 200 level or above or in German Studies courses numbered above 200.

Additional Support:

The "Deutsches Haus" or German House provides an opportunity for students to live in an environment where they can practice their German and participate in programming focused on German culture. Students organize events promoting German cultural events there, and faculty occasionally meet with students at the Haus. This year, one professor gave a lecture on sexuality and human rights in the German tradition, while another spoke on Holocaust memorials there. The Haus has been full in recent years; this year we had an astonishing number of highly qualified applicants who wanted to be the RA there.

Through IES, the College is affiliated with study abroad programs at the Universities of Freiburg, Berlin, and Vienna. The program in Vienna is available for students with little or no prior background in German, while the other two programs require two-years of college level German or the equivalent. In the last ten years, the number of students studying abroad in Germany or Austria has ranged from 1 (1997/98) to 26 (1998/99), averaging about ten per year. In the 2005/6 year, 12 students were abroad on these programs, with another two were studying on approved programs in Switzerland.

The department is able to hire a native speaker of German to assist in classes, lead conversation groups, and disseminate German culture at the German House. IES, which manages our study abroad programs at the Universities of Freiburg, Berlin, and Vienna, locates potential native speakers from these universities. They live in the German House.

The program makes use of the Language Learning Center, which has been somewhat in disarray because of the death of its director at the beginning of the 2005-6 academic year. He was not replaced and the Center has lacked leadership. But it does still receive German television via satellite, which we use regularly. This year we were able to show the debates between the candidates for chancellor of Germany, Angela Merkel and Gerhart Schröder in the language lab; a good group of internationally minded students and faculty attended.

We have a weekly “Stammtisch” at the Mill Creek Brew Pub on Friday afternoons at 5. Anyone who wants to practice German can come and do so. Despite the establishment’s name, it is not a bar, so students of all ages can come. By arrangement with the management, no one is required to buy anything. Numbers of attendees range from 2 or 3 to 20.

We are slowly revamping our webpage, and should be releasing it to the world this summer. In addition, we have an active listserv of about 100 people interested in all things German.

A summer intern hired in 2006 has been cataloging the College’s collection of German films, learning to administer the equipment in the language learning center, polling alumni, developing content for the new website, and writing up a German newsletter that will be sent to alumni, students, faculty, and others interested in the program.

We take advantage of the visiting educators program and the Cagley Award at Whitman College to bring in visiting scholars. This year for instance Albert Gouaffo, a Germanist from Cameroon, gave a lecture in German on African Colonialism, and Jenny Hirsch, from Princeton University, spoke on Holocaust films from Italy.

In addition, we actively promote participation by our students in the Whitman Undergraduate Conference. This year’s panel, “Perspectives on Modern Germany: Violence, Sex, and Gender,” was well attended.

Assessment

Faculty:

Faculty from other academic institutions have consistently indicated that they regard the faculty in the Whitman German program as qualified to teach at the college level. The part-time faculty member has received her Ph.D. since the 1997 accreditation. The focus of her dissertation was on Hugo Ball, the Dada poet, and she will be teaching a course on Dada in the upcoming year. Visiting assistant professors have arrived with completed PhDs and considerable publication records. They have all subsequently received tenure-track jobs elsewhere. Their specialties have been in German multiculturalism and German-Jewish studies, and they have offered courses that reflect their interests. The tenured faculty member is a prolific scholar, who has published two well-reviewed books and sixteen articles since the last accreditation. He is currently completing another book and has a co-edited book at press. He has received fellowships from the DAAD, Fulbright and the Rockefeller Foundation since 1997. Nationally, colleagues have elected him to the Executive Committee of the Division of Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century German Literature of the MLA, the Delegate Assembly of the MLA, and the editorial board of the North American Goethe Society’s Book Series, the Steering Committee of Critical Issues: Sex and Sexuality, and the Compton-Noll Award for the Best Essay in Gay and Lesbian Studies of the GL/Q Caucus of the MLA. He offers many courses in eighteenth-century literature and gay and lesbian studies that reflect his expertise. There is therefore substantial evidence that academicians and academic institutions in the United States and beyond regard the core faculty in the German program as highly qualified.

Assessment of Students Majoring in German:

The assessment of the majors has changed significantly since the last accreditation. We no longer give students a six-hour written exam based on a list of great works in the German tradition. After our move to German Studies, it was no longer feasible to come up with a list of all the things about German literature, philosophy, music, history, art history, religion, politics, psychology, and sociology that every undergraduate student should know. Instead we now require students to demonstrate their skills and intelligence with an in-depth senior thesis. They must defend the thesis at an extensive oral examination where they are expected to show basic familiarity with a broad range of topics in German Studies; at this examination, they are also expected to provide analysis of a significant literary text chosen by the faculty and be able to discuss intelligently recent scholarship in German Studies.

The thesis is written in English, because we want our students to be able to articulate complex ideas and thoughts to their fellow Americans. Students must, however, work with original German-language documents, which enables the faculty to determine how well they can read and interpret German. They must be able to place those documents—whether they be political theories, religious approaches, art historical images, operatic texts, psychoanalytic essays, or literary texts—in the context of German culture. In order to write a passing thesis, students must demonstrate original and creative thought, critical analysis, and the ability to communicate those thoughts and analyses to discerning readers.

Theses are read by all the faculty in the German teaching area, plus at least one outside reader. We feel that the outside reader is necessary because of the interdisciplinary nature of our students' projects. The multiple readers make sure that a variety of faculty are assessing the accuracy of the work and the quality of the thinking.

At the oral examination, students defend their thesis, demonstrating their ability to answer questions about German culture that relate to their thesis. The oral examination has two other parts, as well. Students must be prepared to discuss a significant work of German literature and a monograph of recent scholarly work in German Studies. Both are selected by the faculty and are unrelated to the students' theses—ideally they will encourage the students to expand their knowledge base from the focus on the thesis. In 2005/6, the first year that we instituted this program, the literary work was Friedrich Schiller's *Maria Stuart* and the scholarly monograph was Dagmar Herzog's *Sex after Fascism: Memory and Morality in Twentieth-Century Germany*. Since most of the students were writing theses about the twentieth century, the Schiller play forced them to think more historically; similarly the Herzog study required students to think about an aspect of German culture that they had not considered.

Please see our supporting materials for more information on senior theses in recent years.

Student Outcomes:

At Whitman College, German program students regularly receive honors such as Abshire Awards, Perry Awards, and membership in the Order of Wailatpu (which requires that a student be in the top third of his or her class and active in the community.) Beyond the College, students and graduates of the German program have received a great number of fellowships, scholarships, grants and other honors, which suggests that they are well prepared at Whitman College.

Please see our supporting materials for more information on grants received in recent years by graduates of the Whitman College German program and for results of our survey of graduates of the Whitman College German program.

Future Concerns

In addition to the usual tinkering with class descriptions and small changes to the major, we have our eye on a number of initiatives.

Language proficiency:

We will continue to monitor the language proficiency of our students to ensure that they have the basic linguistic tools that they need to understand German. We currently believe that taking the language and literature courses that we offer, and studying abroad, which we encourage, brings their language abilities up to the level necessary. The continuing success of our students in obtaining grants, going to graduate school, and functioning in the German-speaking world provides us with continued evidence of their satisfactory language abilities. However, if we notice that students are finding it increasingly difficult to work with primary texts for their senior theses, we will consider implementing a language proficiency test.

(Inter-)Departmental Cohesion:

Given the interdisciplinary nature of the program, we would like to encourage more cohesion between the core

faculty in the German teaching area and the affiliated faculty. Successful German Studies programs at most institutions have enthusiastic participation by faculty from many areas of the curriculum. We would like to develop that sense of participation and ownership by encouraging the affiliated faculty to participate in decision making within the German program. We could use the required senior reading as a basis for intellectual cooperation, whereby we choose the texts together and discuss them in a faculty reading group. We hope that affiliated faculty will come to departmental social events.

Staffing:

The department will be unable to continue its offerings in gay and lesbian studies and German-Jewish studies at the present staffing rate. Currently these offerings are made possible by the hiring of the third person in the department, the visiting assistant professor, but the timeline for that position is running out.

Enrollments:

Directly related to the difficulties of staffing the program is the problem of low enrollments. By many measures, the German program has some of the lowest average enrollments of any program on campus. The ratio of per semester average credits to average FTE was only 98.20, which is extremely low compared to other departments.

We are hoping to rectify this situation by the introduction of more exciting English-language courses on German culture, dealing with the Holocaust, German-Jewish culture, German film, the fairy tale, and the German discovery of sex. In general, we believe that the German Studies approach will meet the needs and ambitions of more students than the German Literature had. Because of a recent retirement, staffing in the language courses has changed, which we hope will improve enrollments. In addition, we hope that publicizing the success of our majors and minors will draw students.

On the bright side, the major program is numerically relatively strong. In 2006, the number of majors per tenure-track faculty member (9) was actually higher than average for Whitman College, and the number of majors per FTE (5.4) was within the average range. This situation seems to be improving, as the following numbers show:

<u>Total</u>	<u>Number of Majors</u>
1947-56	8
1957-66	22
1967-76	26
1977-86	25
1987-96	27
1997-2006	33

So we need to build on this success, while also attracting more non-majors to our courses.

Accreditation Self-Study
Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures - Japanese

The Japanese Program

The Japanese language program aims to help students gain a solid background in modern Japanese and enable them to communicate, interact, and negotiate cultural meanings in Japanese. The program introduces the four basic language skills of listening, reading, developing cultural awareness, and learning how to write the *hiragana* and *katakana* syllabaries as well as a set number of *kanji* or Chinese characters. In addition to the Japanese language classes, the program also supports a program in modern and classical Japanese literature, a class in Japanese aesthetics, as well as independent study classes in calligraphy and tea ceremony. Students can earn a minor in Japanese language and literature, or they can also elect to major in Asian Studies and concentrate on a topic that focuses on Japan. Finally, the Japanese program supports and coordinates the activities at a Japanese language house, the Tekisuijuku, where students interested in Japanese language and culture live in a residence with a native speaker from Japan.

Description of the Program

The Japanese language program is based on a two year sequence of four classes: J105 and J106 in the first year and J205 and J206 in the second year. Students use special notes provided by Professor Akira Takemoto and the *Yookoso* textbooks and workbooks by Yasuhiko Toosaku. Professor Takemoto remains the lone anchor for the Japanese language program. Recently, the college hired a part time instructor to teach third year Japanese. Professor Takemoto teaches the independent study fourth year program.

The Whitman College Japanese language program helps students develop a well-rounded proficiency in Japanese and a fundamental understanding of Japanese culture. Indeed, the two year language program serves as an important step for students interested in learning more about Japanese society, literature, history, art, and religion. The program also prepares students to study in Japan for a semester or a year. For students who express a strong desire to focus their study on Japan, the program encourages them to apply for the Associated Kyoto Program. This program sponsored by fifteen prestigious liberal arts colleges, including Amherst College, Bates College, Bucknell University, Connecticut College, Carleton College, Colby College, Middlebury College, Mount Holyoke College, Oberlin College, Pomona College, Smith College, Wellesley College, Wesleyan University, Whitman College, and Williams College, sends approximately 40 students to the AKP Center at Doshisha University in Kyoto, Japan. Whitman sends approximately 3-5 students per year for this year-long intensive program in Japanese language and culture. Students who elect to spend only a semester in Japan often go to Kansai Gaidai in Osaka. Beginning in the summer of 2006, Professor Takemoto has set up a short-term (two-week) non-credit homestay and study program at Nagano University in Ueda, Japan for students with at least one year of Japanese language. In June of 2006, 3 students participated in this program. Finally, the program assists students interested in teaching English conversation in Japan. Every year, Professor Takemoto provides workshops and orientation sessions for students interested in teaching in Japan with either the Japanese Ministry of Education's JET (Japan Exchange Teacher) Program or a private English language conversation school in Shikoku, Japan. Each year, Whitman sends approximately 10 students to the JET Program and 2 students to the private school in Kanonji, Shikoku. The program in Japanese, therefore, provides a program for students to gain basic skills in Japanese. At the same time, it offers those who are majoring in Asian Studies with a Japan focus a program that will help them develop the experience of reading and translating vernacular sources that can be used as primary sources for the Asian Studies senior thesis.

The Japanese Language curriculum centers around four major skills — writing, reading, listening, and speaking. Classes in the first two years meet five days a week. Classes in the third year meet three days a week. The fourth year program is an independent study program and students usually meet with Professor Takemoto once a week. The following is a short description of the language program goals and how the program monitors and assesses student progress.

Writing Japanese:

The J105 (first semester first year) program focuses on the introduction of the three different ways of writing Japanese. The program stresses not the simple memorization of syllabaries and Sino-Japanese characters (approximately 70 in the first semester), but a deeper understanding and an appreciation for how to write Japanese beautifully. Professor Takemoto in conjunction with Fujii Yoshiyasu, a master calligrapher, has developed a CD program that helps students see clearly how the *hiragana*, for example, are written. On specially designed worksheets, students are asked to follow a strict set of instructions that begins with lessons on how to hold a pencil and how to use an eraser. Writing Japanese beautifully requires an understanding and a sensitivity for how writing implements and tools can transform a simple handwriting experience into a disciplined practice. Indeed, it takes a full two years for students to learn basic calligraphic techniques and habits. All written assignments (grammar exercises, short compositions, letters, journals, notes) must be written in pencil on specially designed sheets of practice paper. Written work not done neatly on these practice sheets are not accepted.

In the second semester of the second year (J206) students begin learning how to use brush pens and calligraphy brushes. Special calligraphy classes (pencil, brush pen, brush) are offered as independent study classes for interested students.

Reading Japanese:

Learning to read Japanese requires a different set of exercises. By the end of the first semester, students are asked to read aloud a short passage that the instructor assigns as well as a short passage that the student has written. Intonation, awareness of sentence patterns and syntax comes from the repeated practice of reading short passages. Most of the passages are taken from Japanese translations of western literary works. In the past few years, students have been asked to read short passages from the Japanese translation of Antoine de Saint-Exupery's *The Little Prince*. In each successive semester, the passages become longer and more complex. Students are required to listen to native speakers read the texts and to mimic their reading styles. By the end of the second year, students are asked to read complex essays and stories as well as stories for children.

Listening to Japanese:

The *Yookoso* textbook comes with a comprehensive workbook that includes a wide variety of listening comprehension exercises. Students are required to complete the assignments in the workbook. The assignments, however, are presented so that students do not directly work from the workbook alone; that is, each listening comprehension assignment is specifically designed by the instructor. Professor Takemoto starts with the comprehension exercises provided by *Yookoso* and adds his own voice to the CD/taped lesson. The instructions for the listening comprehension exercise are given by Professor Takemoto; supplementary grammar and culture explanations are also provided by Professor Takemoto. Students listen both to the voices in *Yookoso* program and the voice of Professor Takemoto. Normally, students complete one listening comprehension exercise a week. Classroom time also affords students an opportunity to listen to Professor Takemoto, his native speaker assistant, and senior language students who assist with group drill sessions.

Speaking Japanese:

In addition to the reading, writing, and listening program, all four levels of Japanese requires students at the end of each semester to prepare for a 20-30 minute oral interview. For the oral examination at the end of the first semester of J105, students memorize a 4-5 page script. The oral examinations are conducted individually in Professor Takemoto's office. Practice interviews and speeches are conducted throughout the semester. There are normally three oral tests before the final interview at the end of the semester. In each successive semester, the script becomes longer but more flexible, allowing the student to elaborate on subjects that interest them. In the fourth year program, students are required to make several oral presentations during the semester on topics that are often related to their senior research topics.

Courses in Japanese Literature and Art and History

Courses on Japan and other nations of the Pacific Rim are not new to Whitman College. Continuously from

1927, the College has offered courses that explore the cultures of India, Southeast Asia, China, and Japan. With the establishment in 1993 of a major in Asian Studies, however, courses in Japanese literature, art, and history became core courses that helped students develop a broader sense of Japan and its culture. While these courses provide the Asian Studies general student population with an opportunity to learn more about the Japan program, students interested in Japanese courses beyond the introductory level must plan early to participate in study abroad programs. With only one Japan specialist on the Whitman campus, the number of introductory courses that a student can take in any given semester is limited to, at most, two classes. Professor Takemoto teaches classes in Japanese literature and art in the fall and spring semesters. Professor Brian Dott, a China specialist, offers introductory courses in early and modern Japanese history in alternating years.

In the Fall Semester, in addition to the Japanese language classes described above, Professor Takemoto normally offers a three year sequence of classes: *An Introduction to Classical Japanese Literature*, *An Introduction to Modern Japanese Literature*, and a Special Studies Course entitled the *Poet Monk in Japanese Literature*. In the Fall Semester of 2006, Professor Takemoto will offer a special studies seminar for advanced students with a background in Japanese called *The Samurai*. In the spring semester, Professor Takemoto normally offers a course entitled *Ways of Seeing: An Introduction to Japanese Art and Aesthetics*. All courses are four credit, introductory courses in Japanese literature and art. More advanced courses cannot be offered. Students may take additional courses in Japan by enrolling in an independent study course with Professor Takemoto. Recently, students have enrolled in independent study classes to focus on a modern Japanese writer like Tanizaki Jun'ichiro or Kawabata Yasunari. Others elect to focus on classical works like the *Tale of Heike* or the Noh Plays of Zeami. Students have also taken independent reading courses on the *Vimalakirti Sutra* or the works of Shinran Shonin.

Elective courses in Japanese literature and art are evaluated and upgraded by examining student recommendations and evaluating student performances on tests and foreign study experiences. In the literature classes, students are asked to write critical essays on specific works and to take examinations that ask them to compare or tie together literary works from different historical periods. Final papers and final oral presentations serve as important ways to evaluate student performances. In the *Art and Aesthetics* course, students are asked to take mid-semester and final slide examinations. They also submit final papers and work in groups to make a presentation to the instructor. Course content is evaluated further by discussion and syllabi exchange with colleagues at professional meetings, and more significantly, with colleagues who teach similar courses at institutions that belong to the Associated Kyoto Program Consortium. The AKP Consortium sponsors a syllabi exchange program for classes in Japanese studies and hosts conferences for language teachers.

In addition to the regular course offering, the Whitman Japanese Studies program offers special courses through the art department in Japanese calligraphy and the art of the tea ceremony (five students per semester). These courses offer students opportunities to gain special instruction in the practice and art of Japanese calligraphy and tea ceremony. Both courses involve direct instruction from the instructor and stress the development not simply of a technique but the coordination of mind and body. The classes afford students with the unique experience of learning a traditional art according to strict Japanese pedagogical methods. They have commented that it helped them to appreciate what it means to concentrate their minds in a sustained and relaxed manner. Two years ago, four Whitman students gave an actual demonstration of the Yabunouchi style of serving tea at the annual conference of ASIANET at Whittier College. Normally, students practice tea ceremony in the tea room that was designed and built by Professor Takemoto in the Sheehan Gallery. Calligraphy lessons are given in the Japanese language classroom on the third floor of Olin.

Enrollments

Enrollments in first year Japanese language classes remain consistent. 18-20 students enroll in J105 and 16-18 students usually complete the one year program. 14-17 enroll in J205 and 14-16 students complete the second year program. 5-8 students enroll in the third year program and 6-8 students (with varying skill levels) enroll

in independent study classes at the fourth year level. Enrollments in the literature classes vary from 8 to the 12 student limit. The Arth 248 *Introduction to Japanese Art and Aesthetics* class consistently fills up with 20 students. The enrollment numbers in Japanese language classes in particular place great burdens on a one person teaching area. Students in the third and fourth year programs do not receive the kind of attention that is necessary for advanced students. Classes for students returning from study abroad programs in Japan, for example, do not adequately provide the kind of curriculum that would help students retain the excitement of their most recent experiences. Finally, there are almost no upper level classes in Japanese studies for students who have already taken introductory Japan studies classes at Whitman College or at a study abroad program.

A Japanese Studies program founded on a single Japan specialist does not allow for any significant changes in the current program. Among the AKP schools listed above, Whitman is the only one that has only one Japan specialist. Most AKP schools have at least two full time Japanese language and literature specialists as well as Japan specialists in several different fields including art, government, and religion.

Special classes in Japanese studies were made possible during the spring of 2002 and the spring of 2006 because of a generous grant from the Freeman Foundation to bring visiting lectures to campus from Japan. In the spring of 2002, for example, Professor Meiji Yamada came to teach two special classes in Buddhism and the art of the tea ceremony as well as special independent study classes for advanced language students; Toyota Mokugen taught a beginning and intermediate/advanced class in Japanese Ceramics. In the spring of 2006, Professor Atsuo Ikuta taught classes in traditional Japanese book and scroll making while Professor Kayo Toko introduced students to traditional Japanese paper making. Without this grant, students could not have experienced classes beyond the two introductory courses offered every year.

Changes in the language program are reflected in the slight changes that Professor Takemoto has made in his pedagogical methods. In particular, the program in Japanese mirrors his current interest in Japanese calligraphy. The emphasis on writing Japanese beautifully now extends beyond the first semester of Japanese to the entire three year program. Recognizing that few teachers stress handwriting skills, Professor Takemoto has placed even more emphasis on basic handwriting skills. With the advice and help of master calligrapher, Fujii Yoshiyasu (Seattle, Washington), Professor Takemoto has made the writing of Japanese an important part of the Japanese language curriculum at Whitman College. His interest in the Japanese Tea Ceremony and Buddhism also serve as important hooks that capture the interest of beginning students of Japanese language.

The Minor in Japanese Language and Literature

The program also sponsors a Minor in Japanese language and literature. Students must complete the two year sequence of Japanese language classes (J206 or equivalent). In addition, students must take twelve more credits in Japanese literature or advanced Japanese language classes. Under the guidance of the instructor in the Japanese program, students are encouraged to get a background in traditional and modern literature and to take advanced courses in Japanese that allow them to read literary works in the original. As noted above, in the language classes, students are asked to pass a series of three examinations that test their reading and grammar skills, their listening and speaking skills, and their skills in writing Japanese scripts and characters. In the literature classes, students are asked to write critical essays on specific works and to take examinations that question, for example, how western notions or ideas of literary “genres” can be applied to Japanese literary works. The assessments are designed and administered by the faculty member in Japanese. Students who apply for the Associated Kyoto Program are asked to submit essays that demonstrate their knowledge of Japan; and students who are accepted into the Associated Kyoto Program are required to take placement examinations in Japanese at the AKP Center in Kyoto. These placement tests help determine the relative skill levels of Whitman students with other students from the AKP consortium colleges.

Future Plans

The last accreditation report concluded that “The Japanese program cannot develop anything new until the college provides a second full time instructor. With a second faculty member the program could offer a full

third year language course, a two semester sequence of literature courses and a greater variety of special topics courses. Indeed, the Japanese language program could finally become an equal member of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures and play an even more vital role both in this department and in the recently established Asian Studies Program.” Nothing has changed. Student interest in Japan remains high. Classes directly related to Japan are minimal. Everything still rests on the shoulders of one faculty member. Recent talk about growth, change, or improvement after years of veiled promises rings false.

Accreditation Self-Study
Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures - Spanish

1. Goals

This teaching area strives to enable students to master Spanish language – including the skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing – as well as Hispanic literature, film and culture in general. We understand these subject areas as taking in Spain, Latin America and the Hispanic population of the United States.

Specifically, our pedagogical goals are three fold:

1. To enable our students to acquire skills in speaking, reading and writing so that they can function with ease in Spanish in both practical and academic settings.
2. To enable our students to acquire an understanding of the history and cultures of Spain, Spanish America, and U.S. Latinos. This element of our curriculum contributes more depth and meaning to the first goal.
3. To prepare our students to be able to pick up a wide variety of texts in Spanish (newspapers, novels, short stories, poetry, essays, cinema, critical and informational articles) and understand and analyze them intelligently using both spoken and written Spanish.

Our inclusion of the Hispanic population of the United States in our program reflects a new trend nationwide in Spanish language and literature programs. This is both to acknowledge the literary and cultural contributions of US Latinos to our discipline and to also expand our offerings to better suit the current interests of our faculty and students. Our integration of US Latino literature and culture to our already broad offerings in Spanish and Spanish American literature and culture allows our students to obtain a better understanding of Hispanic language, culture, tradition, and history, and to place Hispanic Studies in a global and contemporary context that is both interdisciplinary and relevant to their own experiences in an increasingly multicultural world and United States.

2. General Description of the program

We offer courses focused on the language at three levels, with a dual track (305/306 or 335/336) at the advanced level :

- Elementary 105, 106
- Intermediate 205, 206
- Advanced, in the context of culture 305, 306
- Advanced, in the context of literature 335-336
- Advanced, in the context of Spanish-English translation 325

We offer courses at the 400 level in several subject areas.

- The literature of Spain
- The literature of Latin America
- The literature of US Latinos
- Hispanic theatre from Spain, Latin America and the US
- Hispanic film from Spain, Latin America and the US
- A capstone course that integrates all of the other elements 490
- Independent study at the 400-level
- Honors thesis for senior Spanish majors 498

We also participate in the Core program, teaching General Studies 145, 146.

Some courses are taught through the Studies in World Literature program, which are often cross-listed with Rhetoric and Film Studies, while others count as part of the Latin American Studies major. Those taught under

the rubric of World Literature differ from other advanced courses within our teaching area only in that they are taught in English instead of Spanish.

Spanish faculty provide significant administrative and curricular support in the Latin American Studies major and minor programs initiated by a committee of faculty members from the departments of Anthropology, Art History, Biology, History, and Politics.

The faculty in the Spanish teaching area consists of four tenure-track people, a full-time adjunct, and an adjunct who teaches part-time according to changing enrollments and special circumstances. The four tenure-track faculty hold PhD's (one also has a PhD in philosophy) and two adjuncts hold MA's in the field of Spanish language, literature and culture. The schools that conferred these degrees include Cornell, Princeton, University of New Mexico, Universidad de Salamanca (Spain), and Washington State University. The ranks represented are: one full professor holding an endowed chair, three assistant professors, one instructor, and one adjunct instructor.

In line with Whitman's guidelines for professional development, all of the teachers in our area have frequently attended professional meetings, chairing sessions and delivering papers. In the last three years Profs. Solórzano-Thompson and Colahan have taken students to these conferences to make presentations. Spanish majors have also been encouraged by the faculty to take advantage of Whitman College's yearly Undergraduate Conference to present their work. Each year, at least three Spanish majors present original research at this event.

Another significant source of teaching has been visiting educators, many of them brought from Spanish-speaking countries other than the US. While to date they have not taught entire courses by themselves, they usually come for three to five days and are well integrated into the objectives of the courses to which they contribute both in the classroom and in individual meetings with students about research projects. Our teaching area has made exceptionally active use of the generous funds available for this purpose both through the visiting educator program and the Cagley endowment designed especially for the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures.

Courses, as well as volunteer work, often incorporate contact with local, Walla Walla Spanish-speakers, which represents a large portion of the town's population. For example, students in a Whitman course on translation have worked with Hispanic students studying writing in English at Walla Walla Community College and have discussed and corrected each other's essays.

The Spanish teaching area, as part of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, makes constant use of the resources of the Language Learning Center. These resources are primarily electronic, and have enabled our teachers both to improve the effectiveness of teaching listening and speaking as well as strengthening our outreach to bring students into virtual contact with the culture and language of other Spanish-speaking regions. Especially in the last year the Language Learning Center has been rethought and its possibilities are now being more fully and more innovatively used than in the previous five. A job search has now begun for a new director, and the Mellon grants of ten years ago to support electronic innovation in language teaching are being pursued again.

Members of the Spanish teaching area are at the forefront of the implementation of technology in language, literature, and culture courses. Through collaboration with Whitman College Technology Services (WCTS) and NITLE (a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting liberal education and the integration of technology), Spanish professors have integrated various innovative uses of technology in their teaching. These include online course delivery, use of specialized language-learning software, and incorporation of audiovisual materials, student-created video and audio projects, online placement exams for incoming students, etc.

The online placement exams particularly have improved the department's ability to better place incoming first-year and transfer students during the summer break. The exams allow for easy and quick access to the scores, e-mail or telephone communication with the students taking the exams prior to their arrival on campus, and easy record-keeping and analysis of the background information on the students as well as their numerical scores on grammar, vocabulary and reading. This process combined with the "pre-registration" of new students in the summer makes it possible for us to plan the staffing, size, and numbers of sections of language and 300-level courses during the summer and not the day before class starts as had been practice in the past.

Our teaching area employs a native-speaker assistant, the individual changing every year. This person, who is always a young adult from either Latin America or Spain, helps teachers of language courses by conducting scheduled conversation sessions with individual students several times per semester. He or she also delivers talks about aspects of the culture back home, appearing both in courses from the 100 to the 300 level and at campus-wide events. Student awareness of the Hispanic world is increased by this person's organizing a weekly conversation table in the dining halls, living in the Spanish House – not a part of our academic program but an effective tool for maintaining interest in our courses among students – and by hosting a program on the campus radio station.

In response to the growing interest on this campus in Latin America and US Latinos, individual faculty members have participated in relevant extra-departmental activities, or recruited others from outside the department to do so. While, again, these activities are not part of the academic program, they have supplemented it and intensified student focus on Hispanic-related disciplines. An example from the dance department is the addition during these last ten years of both Latin and Flamenco, offered in one case by an adjunct from our teaching area and in another by a friend.

Similarly, several of our teachers have given time as translators, simultaneous interpreters and lecturers at Hispanic events for Club Latino, in the Spanish House, and elsewhere on campus and in Walla Walla. Of special note is the close collaboration between our teaching area and plays that have been staged by the Theater Department. On two occasions in the past decade, Latin American playwrights have been brought to campus to help in the staging of their work in English translation, while other times student actors and directors have staged Hispanic works in either English or the original Spanish.

Enrollments in the last ten years have climbed steadily, coinciding with the national trend in Spanish departments throughout the nation. In response to these rising enrollments, the number of tenure-track positions has risen since 1996 from two to four. In addition, the department has begun to offer extra sections of our language, culture and introduction to literature courses (100, 200, and 300-level), as well as increase our offerings at the 400-level.

Since 1997 the definition of the teaching area has expanded, with the addition of a position in film, theater and culture and another in US Latino literature, film and culture. This came about both as a response to increasing enrollments in Spanish and the creation of new lines by the Whitman College administration. The position in film, theater and culture was originally approved in 1997. Currently, the position is occupied by an assistant professor who started her appointment in 2003. Present course offerings in this teaching area combine critical-thinking assignments, written and oral, about film, theater and culture, with student-led and created performance-based exercises. This dual pedagogy allows students to engage intellectually with the material, as well as to explore the creative process through the creation of original performances (plays, films, presentations). So far this approach has been popular with students and faculty, and has produced high quality creative projects that have been presented in front of the entire campus.

The position in US Latino literature was approved in fall of 2005, as part of a new diversity initiative implemented by the Dean of Faculty Patrick Keef and the College President George Bridges. In its proposal to the administration for the creation of this new line, the Spanish teaching area discussed the growing importance and expansion of this research area nationwide and how this new position would help establish

stronger ties to our local Hispanic population, as well as, help mentor students of Hispanic heritage at the institution. Currently, only one tenure-track member at Whitman (also in the Spanish section) is of Hispanic origin. This new line in US Latino literature brought to Whitman another tenure-track member of Hispanic origin starting in the fall of 2006.

Future plans for the program include the expansion of our culture and geographic area offerings to more effectively integrate the research and teaching interests of our new colleagues, to reevaluate our study abroad programs, and to develop more ties with the local Spanish-speaking community in our area. The extent to which offerings in literature will be cut back remains to be seen, especially the literature of Spain, as the professor with primary responsibility in that subject area will retire in May of 2007, but it is clear that the whole Spanish teaching area is in transition.

Curricular proposals currently under consideration include the creation of co-taught courses that integrate two or more of our teaching areas. For example, in fall of 2004, Professors Weller and Solórzano-Thompson co-taught a course on the portrayal of the Mexican Revolution through film and literature. Other potential co-taught courses might combine literature and theater, readings from different Hispanic traditions and geographical areas, or distinct theoretical approaches.

Conversations among the faculty about how to better foster undergraduate research are ongoing. In our two most recent tenure-track hires, the willingness of faculty to engage students in research was a major factor. Thus far several members of our department have actively and successfully involved students in research. Most notably, Professor Clark Colahan co-authored a book with a Spanish major student under the auspices of a Whitman College Perry Grant. Professor Colahan was recognized for this and other collaborative projects with the G. Thomas Edwards Award for Excellence in the Integration of Teaching and Scholarship in 2004.

Currently, a large percentage of our students spend a semester or a year in a study abroad program in the Hispanic World. The department hopes to reevaluate these programs to ensure their effectiveness and to explore potential alternatives. We are also interested in developing our own short-term study abroad opportunities for our students, a program supported by President Bridges. In March of 2006, Prof. Solórzano-Thompson took a group of Whitman students to the US/Mexico border twin cities of El Paso, TX, and Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, for a study trip. Similar short-term study abroad programs might be created in the future.

Students at Whitman College greatly benefit from the immeasurable resource of having a large, thriving, and increasing Hispanic population; the teaching area hopes to better integrate this unique opportunity to our language, translation, and culture courses.

3. Assessment of academic program and effectiveness

Whitman's frequent evaluation of every faculty member, including the tenured, the tenure-track, the lecturer and the adjunct, is rigorous. Several colleagues visit classes, examine syllabi, and talk with the faculty member under review.

Naturally the methods used in assessing student learning vary according to course objectives. At the 100 and 200 level heavy reliance is placed on frequent in-class tests and participation in oral exercises, as well as short writing assignments. At the 300 levels we add longer writing exercises and reading assignments. 400-level courses are conducted as seminars, with students writing substantial essays based on independent research. At this stage, there are few tests administered in class. However, at all levels, students are judged on their skill and pre-class preparation as they are required to participate actively in class discussion, something that we consider a hallmark of a Whitman education, as well as excellent practice in the oral use of Spanish.

To provide specifics for our description of this crucial aspect of the Spanish program, a look at the history of the assessment component of our capstone course, Senior Seminar for Spanish Majors, is useful. As the course will be taught in the fall semester 2006, student learning is gauged in five ways. First, there are four assigned

essays, one for each of the four genres to be studied in the course, and each one will require close analysis of a literary work or a feature film, placing his or her own comments in the context of views published by established literary critics. Second, in each class session students will answer, as part of their oral participation grade, detailed questions about the day's assignment, which will often include not only reading or viewing a primary text but also integration of secondary, critical evaluation of the primary work. Third, several times during the semester each student is required to lead the class discussion and analysis of the day's assigned reading. Fourth, there will be three one-hour written exams, one on ten works of Spanish literature, one on ten works of Spanish American literature, and one on ten Hispanic films, and all of these will be computed into not only the grade assigned on the teaching area's comprehensive exam for majors but also into the grade in this course. Fifth, each student will present a one-hour oral exam, administered by three professors, on one specific work of literature or a film, and this activity will also be counted into the grade for both the comprehensive exam and this course.

This assessment package has been reached after a period of several years of experimentation and fine-tuning. For a long period, even before the institution of the capstone course, the comprehensive exam consisted of a three-hour written exam on Spanish literature and a three-hour written exam on Latin American literature. Each test had a long list of readings – some fifty works – from which questions were drawn. Following these written exams by a few days, there was an individualized one-hour oral exam, which focused on areas in which the student had answered questions in a marginal manner.

This two-part examination over such a large body of information, though very thorough, eventually was felt to be too stressful for the students. In its place, during a period of two or three years, the written exam was eliminated from the process. Instead, each student picked out two Spanish works and films and two Spanish American works and films, and two thirds of the one-hour oral was spent answering questions on them. One third of the oral exam was dedicated to the student presenting a longer analysis of one work, selected by the student in advance. As this overview may suggest, this system proved too rushed and superficial, as well as allowing students to avoid subject areas in which they were not prepared. We feel that the new system inaugurated fall 2006, used within the context of the Senior Seminar, will achieve a better balance between rigor and reasonableness.

4. Appraisal of the program

The program's outcomes are strong, as indicated by the following points:

- All our majors achieve near-native fluency in written and spoken Spanish; minors are at the proficient level or above in writing and speaking.
- In recent years our graduates have won prestigious fellowships, including the Watson and Fulbright, and a finalist for the Rhodes.
- Each year, the top students in our program write optional Honors Theses. These theses demonstrate outstanding original research using primary and secondary sources in Spanish. Recent theses have focused on different aspects of Hispanic literature, theater, and film. The average length of a Spanish Honors Thesis is 80 to 100 pages; and it is written entirely in Spanish.
- Many of our graduates have done graduate work in highly rated programs.
- Our teaching area is well represented among the students on campus elected to Phi Beta Kappa.
- At the third-year level, a very high percentage of our Spanish majors study abroad in a Hispanic country for either one or two semesters. And it should be added that they invariably find the program much less challenging than the Spanish courses here at Whitman; in Spain we broke with a major US program, IES, because it refused to raise standards, claiming that we are working at the level of graduate — not typical undergraduate — American education. As a result, some of our top students have enrolled directly in Spanish universities – with assistance from Middlebury College – thus avoiding the handholding and dumbing down of subjects commonly found on student abroad programs that send large groups of Americans in over-protected groups.
- Recent graduates have worked in Latin America in good programs, including World Teach and the Peace Corps.

Currently we are experiencing the following challenges:

- A continuous effort on our part to adjust our offerings to the increasing interest by students in all our language, literature, and culture courses. We are continuously faced with the need to create extra sections of our courses to provide enough slots for all students interested in Spanish and to limit class sizes to no more than 20 students to thus ensure the best quality of instruction and adequate individual attention to all students enrolled in Spanish.
- The need to reevaluate our entire program to accommodate the addition of new faculty members with new and diverse teaching and research interests, in order to ensure that we have a coherent and cohesive language, literature, and culture program that offers students a wide array of choices that mutually support and complement each other and form a logical and in-depth program of study in Hispanic language, literature, and culture.
- Our desire to foster the eventual integration of important works of the Hispanic canon in the general studies curriculum at Whitman. Currently the 145-146 general studies sequence does not incorporate any text from the Hispanic canon; we feel this is a huge oversight in our general education program. Through our future participation in general studies, we hope to repair this critical omission. Progress has already been achieved in modifying the curriculum of General Studies 245: *Critical and Alternative Voices* in order to include the work of Richard Rodriguez, a US Latino who, through his scholarly work, engages critically with the Western (including the Hispanic) canon.
- We are at the forefront of an emergent conversation with other members of the Foreign Languages and Literatures department to discuss potential pedagogical and technological developments in foreign language, literature, and culture courses, in order to foster cross-language study, area studies (European Studies, Caribbean Studies, etc.), and to consider the effects on our teaching under a potential language requirement at Whitman College.
- We are also currently engaged in several campus-wide conversations about the creation of new area studies that rely and incorporate foreign language, literature, and cultural study. Members of our teaching area have been at the forefront of the creation of the Latin American Studies Program, the Gender Studies Program, and the Race and Ethnic Studies Program.

As the need for technology in the classroom increases college-wide, we are experiencing a continuing need for permanent “smart classrooms” (computer access, projectors, DVD, VCR, etc.) in every classroom used for the teaching of our courses at all levels. Given that so much of our teaching impeccably and imaginatively incorporates technology to better serve the pedagogical needs of our students, we are especially vulnerable to these shortages. Through close collaboration with the Language Learning Center, WCTS, and NITL, we are working to alleviate this situation.

Accreditation Self-Study

Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures – World Literature

Courses in world literature are taught almost exclusively by the Foreign Language and Literature faculty. Over the past ten years, these offerings have evolved to include world cinema, cultural topics, literary theory, as well as courses in single authors or periods. At present, only French requires world literature courses for the major. However, all of the foreign language majors, including Asian Studies, and English accept world literature courses as electives. The world literature courses greatly enrich the offerings of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures by allowing students to engage with texts in translation that they do not normally read in classes offered in foreign language.

Accreditation Self-Study
Gender Studies Program

A. Program Goals

The goal of the Gender Studies program is to train students in the critical analysis of gender and sexuality, using the varied approaches represented by the variety of fields from which this area of study draws. Gender Studies at Whitman encompasses feminist and women's studies, men's and masculinity studies, and lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender (LGBT) and queer studies. The program has offered a minor for well over a decade, and it established a major in 2004. In addition, it remains a vital contributor to the general education goals of the college, by offering the popular Introduction to Gender Studies each semester and by encouraging faculty from around the campus to offer courses focused on the study of gender and/or sexuality.

B. Program Description

1. Major and minor

The Gender Studies minor has maintained a small but solid presence at Whitman over the past decade, averaging three to four minors in each graduating class. In keeping with the strong interest in liberal education shared by the Program and Whitman College as a whole, requirements for the minor encourage students to find a particular interest yet also to study broadly. After students have received a shared grounding through the single required course – *Introduction to Gender Studies* – they choose from a range of approved lower- and upper-division courses that focus on the study of gender and sexuality, including courses in the social sciences, the humanities, and when possible, the sciences. Gender Studies minors have gone on to careers in primary, secondary, and higher education; research; law; medicine; social services; and design.

In the spring of 2004, a growing number of Individually Planned Majors in Gender Studies and the prevalence of an established Gender Studies or Women's Studies major at many comparable colleges led the Whitman faculty to approve the creation of a major in Gender Studies. Like the minor, the Gender Studies major draws on the interdisciplinary strengths of the college, requiring its students to gain a breadth of knowledge that is then integrated during the senior year rather than restricting them to a narrow set of required courses. Like the minors, majors in Gender Studies must take *Introduction to Gender Studies*. Until the senior year, the rest of their courses are restricted in only three ways: first, courses must be approved for the major and minor by the Gender Studies steering committee; second, at least one course must fall within each of four cluster areas (theory, history, social sciences, and humanities), and students are also encouraged to take a Gender Studies course in the sciences when possible; third, each student must select a concentration within which she or he will take at least three courses. Students are encouraged to write their senior theses on a topic that falls within their concentration.

Toward the end of spring semester in the junior year, each major must complete and submit a junior year review form. This includes: a list of courses taken; a statement of the student's concentration within the major and a list of the courses that fulfill that concentration; a proposed topic for the senior thesis and an explanation of how the thesis topic draws on the student's concentration; a summary of research skills needed for the thesis and an explanation of how the student has acquired or plans to acquire such skills; and the name (and signature) of the student's chosen thesis advisor. Though thesis advisors are assigned in the spring of the junior year, second and third readers are not assigned until fall in order to allow for shifts within the thesis topics. In the fall semester, senior Gender Studies majors take a capstone seminar (first offered in fall 2005) that integrates their previous coursework through explorations of current research in the field. The capstone also lays the groundwork for the senior thesis through assignments that culminate in the production of a senior thesis proposal at the end of the semester. Students meet with thesis committee members for an oral defense of the proposal that serves as both a trial run for the spring thesis orals and an opportunity for committee members to make suggestions before the student delves deeper into the project. Finally, the senior assessment for Gender Studies majors consists of a senior thesis and an oral exam in which the student defends the thesis as well as discussing broader topics related to her or his major course of study.

Newly available to the program's majors is the option to present a portion of their senior theses at a regional Gender Studies conference. In the spring of 2006 the program chair accompanied two students – a Gender Studies senior and another senior whose major was closely affiliated with Gender Studies – to such a conference at Idaho State University in Pocatello. In future years, due to ease of travel, the plan is to attend the long-running Gender Studies conference at Lewis and Clark College instead. Preparation for and attendance at the conference will count as a single credit of Independent Study work, and between the college and the Gender Studies program, the students' expenses are fully covered. The experience is exciting and educational, as it offers students not only the chance to present their thesis work in progress and receive feedback from scholars beyond Whitman, but also the opportunity to hear paper presentations and keynote speakers in the field.

Since the last accreditation in 1997, Whitman has graduated six students in Gender Studies. Five of these were Individually Planned Majors completed between 2000 and 2005, and in 2006 the program graduated its first official major. The class of 2007 will add five more graduates to that class, nearly doubling the number of majors graduated. The class of 2008 has only two Gender Studies majors so far, but may garner one or two more as this year's juniors ponder adding a second major. Since the Gender Studies alumni are all recent graduates, there are no long-term career trajectories to report as of yet. At present, however, they already show a variety similar to that of the minors, with career paths ranging from education to sales and from student services to religious leadership.

2. Faculty and curriculum

Fifty-seven of Whitman's faculty members are currently involved in the Gender Studies program at the most basic level: subscription to the "gender faculty" e-mail list, which updates subscribers on events relevant to the program and occasionally petitions for volunteers to serve the program in some way. In the 2006-2007 academic year, seventeen faculty members offered courses in their own departments that fulfill the requirements for the Gender Studies major and minor (this is in addition to the Program's regular offerings of *Introduction to Gender Studies* and the *Senior Seminar*). A total of thirty-six regularly offered courses fulfill Gender Studies requirements, and several others appear on a temporary basis each year as special topics courses offered by both visiting and permanent faculty. As of the 2006-2007 academic year, students also have the opportunity to pursue independent study courses in Gender Studies, although only four credits in such courses may count toward the major.

In the 2004-2005 academic year, Whitman created and filled a new tenure line with a partial (one-third) assignment in Gender Studies. In response to having one-third of a permanent faculty member, and in response to the changed administrative needs involved with the establishment of the major, the program restructured its administrative functions during the 2005-2006 year. Previously administered by a consortium of program chairs – one from each division of the college – the program now has a steering committee composed of the current "core" faculty in the program (those teaching *Introduction to Gender Studies* and *Senior Seminar*), plus representatives of any division not represented by those faculty members. One member of the steering committee, chosen by the committee members, serves as chair of the committee and director of the program. Current and previous members of the program's steering committee serve as major advisors, and thirteen affiliated faculty members have agreed to serve as thesis advisors for the program when needed. All of these changes should enable the new major to run smoothly and efficiently, should make administrative procedures as clear as possible to students, and should make it easy to implement any alterations that become necessary as the major grows and matures.

Introduction to Gender Studies continues to be an extraordinarily popular course at Whitman, and it serves the college not only as a sought-after elective but also because it counts toward the distribution requirement in "alternative voices." Taught by several different faculty members, each with a unique angle but all with the same basic course goals, the class has been near, at, or significantly over capacity in every semester for which there are records (that is, Fall 2001 to the present). Waiting lists for the class are often lengthy, with the result

that first- and second-year students often cannot enroll in the course at all. This has become cause for concern with the institution of the Gender Studies major, especially since the introductory class is not only a major requirement but also an important potential site for the recruitment of majors. In response to this concern, in 2005-2006 the program offered registration priority to those students on the waiting list from the previous semester. As this only resulted in further wait-listing, for the 2006-2007 year, the program is trying a new tactic: it has restricted enrollment in the course to first-and second-year students only, except in special cases where the instructor may consent to the enrollment of a junior or senior. This tactic has reduced the waiting lists significantly, and thus seems to be meeting with success.

C. Assessment within Gender Studies

1. Assessment of students

Primary assessment for Gender Studies minors is conducted on a course-by-course basis; as with most minors, there is no cumulative assessment save for the student's grade point average within the field of study. Gender Studies majors are assessed in four key ways: within individual classes; in the preparatory thesis process and the senior seminar; through the written senior thesis; and through the oral defense. Each of these aspects of assessment allows for a slightly different view of the students' success (and thereby the program's success) in meeting the goals outlined above.

Interdisciplinarity once again serves as a strength for the program in the context of assessment. Since majors in the program are exposed to a wide variety of faculty who often hold very different methodological perspectives, a student's overall performance record in the major reflects the aggregate opinion of faculty across the disciplines on her or his ability to think critically about questions of gender and sexuality, and her or his ability to express that analysis cogently in written, oral, and occasionally creative formats.

In spring 2006, the program began requiring its juniors to submit a thesis topic statement. As mentioned above, as of spring 2007 they will submit this statement as part of their junior year review form, which will then serve as a pre-thesis assessment of the student's major program. It will allow the Gender Studies steering committee not only to offer initial feedback on the topic choice, but also to evaluate the effectiveness of each student's major program in preparing her or him for the thesis project that will be the culmination of that student's studies. If necessary, the steering committee may recommend either a shift in the thesis topic or further preparation through fall semester coursework in the senior year. Furthermore, this form will provide an opportunity for students to self-assess, thereby encouraging greater student involvement in and reflection on the evaluative and educational process.

The senior seminar serves as a continuation and intensification of the assessment process begun at the end of the junior year. One aspect of the seminar, focusing on current research in the field, assesses through class discussion, presentations, and written work the students' facility with key concepts and perspectives within the fields represented by Gender Studies at Whitman. Having completed a wide range of coursework since their experience in the introductory course, students return to the core faculty of the program in the senior seminar to integrate their experiences in the major and enrich each others' learning through the contributions they can make from their respective concentrations within the major. The other aspect of the senior seminar, focusing on students' developing thesis projects, assesses each student's ability to integrate her or his coursework into a well-crafted formal proposal for a high-quality research project.

Finally, the thesis project itself challenges students both to draw from all of their coursework in Gender Studies and to focus their interests within their concentration. The grade on the written thesis, determined jointly by the three members of the student's thesis committee after submission of the final draft and oral defense of the thesis, reflects the student's comprehension of and ability to apply the concepts and perspectives of Gender Studies; the depth, breadth, and accuracy of the student's knowledge within her or his major concentration; and the student's skill in conducting research and writing about the results. During the oral defense of the thesis, the student and committee members meet to discuss the thesis itself as well as the ways in which the thesis

is situated within the field of Gender Studies as a whole. This process allows committee members to clarify any issues that remain unclear in the written text of the thesis, to push for clearer articulation of analyses, and to assess the student's immediate facility with central concepts in the field as well as the student's oral communication skills. Here too, as in their coursework, students are assessed by faculty members drawn from around campus, allowing for a sort of triangulation of assessment that ensures accuracy far more than assessment from within a small department might do. The one challenge of such interdisciplinarity is the risk – which has not yet materialized, but which the program nevertheless hopes to guard against – that faculty members on a committee may have widely divergent perspectives on particular issues. Students working with such faculty members may face confusion and frustration in trying to navigate between them. In an effort to keep committee members and students on the same page, in spring 2007 the program asked thesis committees to meet monthly with their seniors to discuss each student's progress on the thesis.

Though the Gender Studies steering committee continues to institute small changes as the major program develops, the first set of senior theses indicates that the major structure is quite effective. Both theses were of good quality, and the students chose topics that fit well with their concentrations within the major. Committee members found the oral exams enjoyable, and the students conducted themselves admirably. Their committees granted “pass” grades without hesitation to both students' theses and oral exams.

2. Assessment of faculty and curriculum

With the exception of the core courses – *Introduction to Gender Studies*, the *Senior Seminar*, and *Senior Thesis* – and occasional special topics and independent study courses, all of the courses that count toward the Gender Studies major and minor are offered under the auspices of another department on campus. The primary responsibility for assessment of these courses and the faculty who teach them therefore falls to their home departments and the campus personnel committee. Permanent faculty who teach the core Gender Studies courses also have home departments outside of Gender Studies that bear primary responsibility (along with the personnel committee) for assessment. At present, Gender Studies has one adjunct member who teaches the introductory course when needed; she is the only faculty member for whom the program bears primary assessment responsibility. She was initially hired when it came to the attention of faculty in the program that she was teaching a similar introductory course at the local community college. Upon requesting and approving her credentials, the chairs of Gender Studies arranged for her to go through a standard interview procedure: she gave a research presentation to interested faculty and students, and underwent a group interview with Gender Studies students, one of the program chairs, and a faculty member who was currently teaching the introductory course. When the program again needed someone to teach the introductory course for fall 2006, and the same person indicated interest, a member of the new steering committee requested her course evaluations from the previous year. Upon determining that the evaluations were of good quality, the committee requested that the Dean of Faculty make the hire. Gender Studies also had a representative on the search committee when the faculty member was hired who currently holds a partial FTE in the program, and that faculty member's teaching in the program plays a part in her regular evaluation by the personnel committee.

It is worth noting here that although the personnel committee provides regular evaluation of all permanent faculty members and the Dean of Faculty evaluates temporary appointments annually, evaluation and mentoring within the classroom generally (and logically) falls on the shoulders of individual departments. This offers a challenge for Gender Studies, which relies heavily on other departments for its faculty and courses and thus has little opportunity to evaluate its faculty from the particular perspectives of its own field. A faculty member who is an excellent teacher overall and highly qualified within her or his own department may not necessarily be a good a teacher or as highly qualified within Gender Studies – yet a departmental evaluation may or may not detect such a discrepancy. As a first effort to address this challenge, the program has developed a formal policy for assessing whether a course should count toward the major and minor: “Courses that fulfill the Gender Studies major and minor requirements are those in which feminism, gender, and/or LGBT studies are a defining and central element. Additionally, students taking such classes for Gender Studies credit should focus any open-topic class projects on a subject related to Gender Studies.” At this point, however,

the program relies on course descriptions and faculty self-assessment to determine whether a course meets these criteria, and has no methods, save for future senior assessments of majors, for evaluating the success of affiliated faculty in meeting the goals of the Gender Studies program.

D. Assessment of the Gender Studies Program

The Gender Studies program is currently vibrant and thriving. Student interest appears to be growing, and more faculty who are interested in the program join the college each year. Evidence to date strongly indicates that the program has been successful in meeting the goals outlined above.

Because of the creation of the new major in 2004, the program has spent the past two years in a process of self-assessment and change. As the number of majors grows and the program matures, much of the steering committee's evaluative task will consist of monitoring the effectiveness and performance over time of the measures it has already instituted.

1. Questions to monitor

Key questions to ask over the next several years center around the structure of the major and the resulting changes to the introductory course. How effective is the current model of the senior seminar – does it fulfill the program's goals of assessing students' abilities and integrating their experiences in the major as well as preparing them to write their theses? How useful is the junior-year thesis topic statement as a tool for preparing and assessing students prior to their thesis year? Does the junior year review form help students to organize their proposals and help faculty to evaluate them? Do monthly thesis committee meetings during spring semester create a more focused and coherent thesis experience for the students? Is it effective to restrict *Introduction to Gender Studies* to first- and second-year students, as long as juniors and seniors continue to have access to the class when necessary, with the instructor's consent?

2. Future changes

While the interdisciplinarity of the Gender Studies program is one of its greatest strengths and allows the program to thrive despite its youth as a major, it also introduces several unique challenges that the steering committee is working to address. These include the evaluation of affiliated faculty and their courses, balancing the need to standardize with the importance of capitalizing on faculty members' diverse strengths, and creating camaraderie in a program whose faculty and majors can be found all across campus.

As mentioned above, all Gender Studies faculty are evaluated by their own departments, the personnel committee, and/or the Dean of Faculty, and a basic mechanism is already in place for evaluating the suitability of courses to count for the major and minor. However, it would benefit the program to engage in some level of evaluation of teaching and syllabi – both for the core courses and for affiliated courses – from the particular perspectives of Gender Studies. Interdisciplinary programs at other schools sometimes have a process whereby faculty become “affiliated” through submitting a brief application form and a copy of their curriculum vitae. While such a formalized process may not be advisable at a small school like Whitman, it might be useful for faculty who wish to serve as thesis advisors. Furthermore, it may be advisable to begin requesting and reviewing syllabi for all courses that count toward the major or minor. New courses might be accepted on the strength of the course description for the first year, with continuing acceptance contingent on evaluation of the syllabus. Additionally, while peer evaluation of all such courses is not practical – short of a course reduction for steering committee members – it would be advisable for the program's core faculty to visit and evaluate each other's versions of the introductory course and the senior seminar on a regular basis.

This latter point brings up the next ongoing task for the Gender Studies steering committee: balancing standardization with individual strengths in the core courses. *Introduction to Gender Studies*, for example, needs to be standardized to the extent that students expect the course to adhere to the published course description and the program relies on the course to provide a solid base for its majors and minors. The senior seminar needs to be standardized to a similar extent and for similar reasons. On the other hand, over-standardization – such as establishing an iron-clad syllabus for either course regardless of who teaches it – forces faculty

members to teach topics and authors, and to use teaching methods, that match poorly with their training and abilities. Such a move purchases standardization at the cost of creativity, individual strengths, and ultimately, quality of teaching. The solution to this challenge is likely to lie in the mutual evaluation proposed above. As long as the number of instructors who teach the core courses is kept to the minimum practical level, those instructors can meet regularly, share syllabi with each other, and sit in on each other's versions of the class, thereby ensuring that the experience of these classes is sufficiently common across instructors while at the same time allowing students to benefit as much as possible from each instructor's unique strengths.

A second challenge of standardization lies in the process of the senior assessment. Senior thesis advisors are currently drawn from a pool of thirteen faculty in seven different departments and all three academic divisions on campus. As different departments have different standards for evaluating senior theses, and some departments only require theses of their honors students and therefore have no established standards for "non-honors" theses, Gender Studies needs to ensure that all of its senior theses are evaluated by the same standards. At present, two mechanisms are in place to ensure that this happens. First, seniors' oral defenses of their thesis proposals take place in a group setting: all faculty members who are serving on at least one Gender Studies thesis committee for that year read all seniors' thesis proposals, and meet together with all of the seniors as a group to discuss those proposals. This provides committee members with an important shared perspective that should assist them when they evaluate the completed thesis. Second, as of the 2006-2007 academic year, each senior will be asked to meet with her or his full committee once a month during the spring semester. This will help to reaffirm the standards for evaluation throughout the development of the thesis, and will provide committee members with several opportunities to send queries to the Gender Studies steering committee before the final assessment takes place. This process will bear watching, however, and it will be necessary to re-visit it in a few years in order to determine whether it has in fact produced a reasonable level of standardization in the senior assessment process.

The final challenge introduced by the interdisciplinarity of the Gender Studies program is that of camaraderie – without which neither faculty nor students would be as committed to the program, and with which many of the above concerns about standardization and communication can be significantly mitigated. Most departments have a certain level of camaraderie and community built into their structure. Faculty members have offices near each other and interact regularly in the hallway, in the faculty lounge, in the building office, at faculty meetings, and sometimes at academic or social events sponsored by the department. Majors in a department interact regularly because they have a greater number of required classes than do Gender Studies majors, and because their elective courses are offered by fewer faculty than is the case in Gender Studies – usually solely those faculty who belong to the department. Even without extra-curricular educational and social events, faculty, majors, and even minors in departmental programs have greater opportunities to build a sense of community than those in non-departmental programs. Gender Studies, then, must be more attentive than departmental programs to the need to build and define a "Gender Studies" community among its students, its affiliated faculty members, and interested staff who support its students and faculty. Core faculty and steering committee members are in regular contact through e-mail and occasional meetings, but this does not address the need to create a sense of community and connection among affiliated faculty. The senior seminar is an excellent source of community for majors, as is senior attendance at a gender studies conference. Prior to the senior year, however, there are fewer sources of such community for students, especially for minors.

Gender Studies does host occasional events that foster community among students, faculty, and staff, but more could be developed in the future. During the 2005-2006 academic year, the program hosted two receptions – one for faculty in the fall semester, designed to foster communication among affiliated faculty members and to introduce new affiliated faculty, and one involving both students and faculty in the spring, to celebrate the program's first graduating class of majors. Both were reasonably well-attended, with 20-25 faculty at the fall reception and 15-20 students and faculty at the spring reception. Future planning needs to consider how to expand on these social events, how to schedule them in such a way that they are accessible to interested staff, and how to attract faculty whose attention is primarily focused on their home departments.

Other events sponsored by or relevant to Gender Studies throughout the year also serve to create a sense of community. At the time of writing of the 1997 accreditation report, for instance, the Gender Studies minor program sponsored a regular symposium in which students and faculty presented and discussed their research. Though this symposium was superseded by the college-wide Undergraduate Conference, in spring 2006 a core faculty member in the program developed a weekend forum on sex workers' rights, which was attended by a number of Gender Studies students and faculty. More events such as these would help the program to build a greater sense of community, while simultaneously enriching the educational experience for the students. One possibility that would combine the older and more recent models would be a symposium that includes a roundtable discussion among students, guest speakers, and faculty.

This is an exciting time for Gender Studies, as the program works to expand and to field-test its new major. The steering committee believes the program is well-positioned to fulfill its goals in educating its majors, minors, and non-majors in the decade ahead.

Accreditation Self-Study
Department of Music

Goals

The Music Department supports the liberal arts mission of Whitman College by providing quality music education and performance opportunities for music majors and non-majors. In keeping with this objective, students are encouraged to pursue creative, analytical, and scholarly activities through a balanced list of course offerings. We believe the success of our program is reflected in the excellent enrollments in music courses, the strong attendance at concerts, and the academic and professional success of our graduates.

Music Department – Description**A. Curriculum****Non-Major Participation:**

Music courses satisfy the fine arts distribution area in the general studies program. Departmental courses (including ensembles and applied lessons) are open to all students; the vast majority receiving music credits are non-majors. In an effort to encourage all interested music students, scholarships are awarded to majors and non-majors by virtue of performance abilities and participation in departmental ensembles.

Music Majors:

The music major program is at the heart of the music department's mission. Since 1997, the number of students receiving degrees in Music has increased from an average of 5 per year to 10. By the senior year, majors are expected to meet essential undergraduate standards of knowledge and performance skills. The curriculum is consistent with those found in similar liberal arts colleges and universities nationwide and is the result of ongoing evaluation and adjustment by the faculty.

Eligibility to Major in Music:

At Whitman, all students can choose to major in music. The music faculty evaluates, through auditions, students declaring a music major and advises them of their prospects for success within the program. The monitoring of music majors by the faculty continues throughout the academic year with discussions held at weekly faculty meetings, following jury examinations, and regularly among faculty of specific areas of study, such as piano, voice, or strings.

The Music Major Tracks:

In 1997 the department proposed the creation of four tracks within the major, intended to provide students with areas of concentration within the major. The tracks subsequently approved by the college faculty are: "Standard Music Degree," "Advanced Performance Emphasis," "History/Literature," and "Theory/Composition Emphasis." Each of these tracks has specific requirements that allow students to concentrate more effectively in their area of interest. In 2006, the faculty approved the addition of a fifth track: "Jazz."

B. Review and Alteration of the Curriculum:

Appraisal of the curriculum is a continuous process for the faculty. The success of courses (and the progress of individual students within those courses) is discussed formally in weekly faculty meetings and informally within the daily routines of each professor. The following are examples of curricular changes made since the last accreditation review to improve course offerings and keep the curriculum current.

Courses in Jazz History, Jazz Theory and Jazz Composing/Arranging:

These courses have been added to support the new Jazz Track for the music major and reflect a growing interest on the part of our students in the field of jazz study and performance.

Introduction to Music Technology and Intermediate Music Technology:

The study of computer music and layout, MIDI recording, digital audio and related topics reflects a

commitment by the department and the college to integrate the use and critical study of technology into our curriculum. Peter Crawford has been hired as a full-time lecturer in Music. His load includes teaching the department's classes in Music Technology, assisting the faculty with issues relating to technology, and conducting the Whitman Wind Ensemble.

Composition:

The private study of composition has been offered at Whitman for many years, usually as an ad-hoc addition to interested faculty members' loads. Recognizing that the study of composition is thoroughly compatible with the mission of the department and the college, the department proposed the addition of composition to the regular courses of study of the department. As a result, the college has approved the course requirements necessary for completion of the Composition portion of the Theory/Composition Track and has hired Professor John David Earnest as Composer-in-Residence to teach private composition lessons.

Performance Track barrier:

The Music Department conducted an extensive review of the Performance Track requirements in 2000. The faculty determined that entry into the Performance Track should be restricted to those students who demonstrate a high degree of proficiency on their instrument, commensurate with the skill required for entry into Performance Study at the nation's top graduate schools. To that end, students are required to play or sing an audition for the music faculty at the end of the junior year in order to pass into 400-level of applied study. Those students who are accepted into 400-level are allowed to complete the requirements for the Advanced Performance Track; those who are not accepted into 400-level are encouraged to complete the requirements for one of the other tracks in the music major.

PDF Option:

The Pass/Fail grading option has been eliminated for all applied credits and ensemble courses (for majors and non-majors) and for all course and credit requirements for the music major and minor. The faculty believes that this change reflects the level of accomplishment and commitment required both of the music major and of any student participating in music ensembles.

C. Enrollment Patterns:

Enrollments in music courses over the past ten years have remained steady. For example, full-time students generated 1,990 credits in 1998-1999, compared with 1,959 in 2005-2006. This suggests that the department has reached its capacity in terms of the number of students each faculty member can teach and the limitations of classroom space and other resources. The largest enrollments are for the *Whitman Chorale* (100 students), first-semester theory courses (80 students in two sections), and the *Whitman Symphony* (45 students). Significantly, in the spring of 2006, students registered for 380 credits of private applied music instruction (representing nearly one-quarter of the student population of the college).

Faculty:

The department is pleased that two of the members of its faculty have been awarded endowed chairs for teaching: Professor Susan Pickett, Catherine Chism Endowed Chair of Music and Professor Robert Bode, Alma Meisnest Endowed Chair of Humanities and Fine Arts. In addition, Professor Lee Thompson was awarded the Howells Award for Teaching in the Humanities in 2004.

At present there are five full-time tenured faculty, three full-time staff and 16 adjunct faculty members in the department. The three full-time staff positions are in voice, piano and Music Technology. The remaining adjunct instructors are on "per student" contracts.

The five tenured faculty include four full professors and one associate professor. Four of the five have doctoral degrees in music; one has a master's degree. There are four men and one woman in this group.

Two of the three full-time staff are women. The tenured and full-time non-tenured faculty has a positive working relationship and takes pride in the spirit of collegiality within the department.

D. Music Technology Enhancement:

In recognition of the commitment of the college to support the curriculum through the use of computer-based materials, WCTS and the Music Department began to outline a plan to develop a music instructional technology program and facility. This plan was put into effect in 1999. In its initial request to the Murdoch Charitable Trust, the college detailed existing needs and outlined a strategy to improve instructional resources in the department. The stated goals of the proposal were 1) to establish a forum to demonstrate the use of technology in music and to identify the training needs of the faculty, 2) to conduct site visits to institutions with successful music technology facilities and 3) to establish a workshop on the use of discipline-specific software in order to assist the faculty in reshaping courses.

In an ongoing effort to evaluate and improve resources, the department regularly discusses ways in which the Music Technology program of the college can be enhanced. Below are listed fourteen projects undertaken since 1999.

1. Replacement or transfer of all Listening Center audio holdings from analog (LP) to compact disc.
2. Addition of computer searchable database for all Listening Center holdings.
3. Installation of MIDI stations in Listening Center
4. Addition of MUS 271 – *Introduction to Music Technology*
5. Addition of MUS 371 – *Intermediate Music Technology*
6. Addition of “smart” classroom – Music Room 202
7. Addition of “smart” music practice room
8. Transfer recording in Chism Recital Hall from analog to digital
9. Addition of *Music Technology Lab*, Music Room 18
10. Installation of ear-training software in Lab, Listening Center, Olin and Maxey Labs
11. Installation of Finale Notation software in Listening Center, Lab
12. Enhancement of faculty desktop resources to enable digital recording and mastering
13. Addition of 1/3 time position in faculty support for Music Technology
14. Addition of 1/3 time position in Music Technology lecturer.

Assessment of Academic Program and Effectiveness

A. Faculty Evaluation:

Teaching evaluation in the department is an ongoing process involving five sources of information:

1. direct observation of and subsequent conversations with faculty by colleagues sitting in on courses, rehearsals and lessons;
2. indirect observations of teaching results through the performances of students in other courses and concert situations;
3. results of standardized course evaluation forms from the Dean of Faculty’s office;
4. results of private music instruction evaluation forms designed by the music department and issued internally; and
5. anecdotal student comments.

B. Public Performance as a tool for evaluation and assessment:

The Department of Music is one of the few on campus that presents public displays of its work. Performances give immediate feedback to the faculty and students as to the effectiveness and quality of their efforts. This response is invaluable to the ongoing evaluation process in the department. Public scrutiny makes the faculty accountable for the quality of its teaching and professional work. The Whitman music faculty takes pride in the high level of performance of each of its members and of its students.

C. Appraisal of Students:

Senior Assessment in the Major and Proficiency Exams:

Music majors must complete senior assessment in the major and proficiency exams to verify knowledge and skills in their primary field. Seniors are required to complete written exams in music history, theory, and aural identification of music literature; a comprehensive oral exam; proficiency exams in piano and aural training; and performance of a half-hour recital (for the Standard Track) or a one-hour recital (for the Performance and Jazz Tracks). Students in the History and Theory Tracks are required to write a thesis in lieu of a public recital. Students in the Composition Track must present a recital of their original compositions.

During their senior year, majors are encouraged to take the departmental capstone course, *Senior Seminar*. This course prepares them for the written, listening and oral exams, and enables the faculty to assess the strengths and weaknesses of each student. The senior exams require a review of all materials covered during a student's undergraduate career.

Senior Assessment in the Major:

The senior exams for Music Majors are in three parts. Students must pass a three-hour written exam in Music History, a three-hour written exam in Music Theory and a one-hour Aural Exam which tests the students' ability to recognize pieces from various stylistic periods.

Those students who have gone on to pursue graduate studies in music report that the review required by this course and the preparation for Senior Exams have been of considerable value in preparing for graduate entrance exams (98% of our graduates pass music history and theory entrance exams upon beginning graduate programs).

In 2000, the faculty undertook an evaluation of the way in which the *Senior Seminar* is taught and elected to change from the then-current system in which one faculty member taught the course, to the present system in which the faculty member who originally taught the material in the students' music history or theory classes is the one who undertakes the review of that particular area. In this way 4 of the 5 tenure-track faculty members now participate in the review of the material for the exams (the newly-added Jazz track has not heretofore been included in the review).

The written exams are central to the evaluation process for graduation. If weaknesses are evident in certain areas of the exam, students must retake those areas. Also, the line of questioning for the subsequent oral exam is partially determined by the strength of the answers given on the written examinations.

Of special value is the hour-long oral exam. During this session, a committee of the music faculty questions students individually on music history, theory and literature. Questions take all forms, require specific theory and history answers, analysis and identification of scores, speculative and creative thinking about trends in the arts, and responses on a variety of specific and far-ranging musical topics. Students are expected to "think on their feet" and be able to articulate their answers using appropriate music vocabulary and phraseology.

The piano and aural proficiency exams are necessary to ensure that all music majors have at least intermediate abilities in piano performance and ear-training skills upon graduation. Students take piano privately and enroll in an ear-training course to prepare for these proficiency exams.

The senior recital culminates the students' applied music study. Senior recitals are preceded by a pre-recital hearing three weeks prior to the scheduled concert. Pre-recital hearings allow the faculty to determine the level of preparation by the students and either approve the recital or counsel them to reschedule.

Honors in Music:

Students may apply for honors in Music. In order to be awarded honors, a student must pass all three portions of the Written Exams with distinction. In addition, those students in the Music History track

must be awarded “distinction” for their thesis. Students in the Theory/Composition track must receive “distinction” for their composition portfolio. Students in the Performance, Standard and Jazz tracks must receive “distinction” for their senior recital.

Interim Evaluations:

Students receive evaluation by the music faculty at a number of points during their career at Whitman. All students must pass a pre-recital hearing in order to perform a public recital. Students wishing to enter the Performance Track must perform a jury for the Music faculty, at which time the faculty votes whether to allow admittance to the Performance Track. All students wishing to declare a major in Music must take a diagnostic ear-training exam. The faculty uses the results of this exam to advise students as to their probable success in the major and to guide them toward an appropriate track.

Profile and Accomplishments of Majors

Majors have represented all instrumental and vocal types and a broad range of academic and performance abilities. Over the past ten years, there have been one or two outstanding performers/scholars in each senior class who have gone on to top graduate schools such as Eastman School of Music, The Juilliard School, University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, Rice University Shepherd School of Music, Florida State University and Arizona State University. Most of these outstanding graduates are currently beginning professional careers in music.

Outstanding graduates include pianist Stephen Beus, who competed in the semi-final round of the Van Cliburn Piano Competition in 2005 and Mark Duffin, tenor, who will sing the role of Don José in New York City Opera’s production of *Carmen* in the fall of 2006.

Assessment of non-majors:

Students may enroll for credit in all music classes, ensembles and applied music lessons regardless of their major. Students who do not intend to be a music major or minor may elect to use the PDF grading option for all music classes except applied lessons or ensembles. Otherwise, there is no difference in the manner in which majors and non-majors are graded.

Non-majors are invited to perform recitals if they choose. Students applying to present a public recital are required to pass a pre-recital hearing three weeks prior to the recital.

All students participating in applied music lessons are required to play a jury for a committee of the faculty at the end of every semester. This jury is graded and is factored into the student’s final semester grade.

All students enrolled in applied lessons are invited to participate in weekly performance classes. Through performance in these classes, the instructor monitors students’ progress. Students also receive valuable feedback from their instructors and student colleagues on such subjects as stage presence, technique and musicality.

All students are welcome to participate in music ensembles, subject to an audition for the ensemble director at the beginning of the semester. Grades for the ensembles are determined through attendance, periodic playing tests and evaluation of the level of each student’s performance at concerts.

Areas of Concern and Future Growth

Faculty:

The three full-time staff positions in voice, piano and Music Technology are on 3-year contracts, receive benefits, and are paid slightly below the norm of one-year teaching positions in other departments. These positions provide necessary services to the department, as voice and piano are the most highly enrolled areas of private instruction in the department and Music Technology represents an area of growing interest and

importance to our program as well. The department has long recommended that these positions be converted to tenure-track positions.

In addition, the department has urged the creation of a new tenure line: Ethnomusicology/Woodwinds. This reflects the growing interest among our students in the area of non-Western music. It also reflects the difficulty our department has had in finding skilled adjunct instructors of flute, oboe and clarinet and our recognition of the importance of quality instruction in these areas to our program.

Adjunct faculty members teach private lessons on specific instruments not covered by the tenured faculty. This arrangement is difficult, as Whitman is not in a metropolitan area where musicians are readily available to teach on all instruments. Adjunct professors on these instruments are difficult to find and current course offerings stretch the resources of the present faculty.

Overloads:

The five tenure track faculty members often teach overloads. These occur most often because of the demands of applied music study and the lack of qualified adjunct instructors to cover areas of instruction that are over-enrolled. For example, in the fall of 2004 and 2005, Professor Ed Dixon taught 20 credits of applied cello rather than the 12 credits needed to constitute the requisite one-third of his teaching load. Overloads are also created when faculty members agree to teach courses within their area of expertise even when it constitutes an overload. For example, Professor Robert Bode teaches *Beginning Conducting* (alternating with *19 Century Music History*) each fall in addition to two choral ensembles, *Senior Seminar* and 12 credits of applied voice lessons, representing a one-quarter overload. Professor Lee Thompson, whose load consists of applied piano, accompanying and one classroom course, routinely adds coaching, recital preparation (for an average of 15 student and faculty recitals each year) and music preparation for opera/music theatre productions, for which no credit is given toward his load. In addition, each faculty member agrees to oversee senior theses and Independent Study courses, for which no credit is given toward the calculation of their loads.

The faculty is committed to covering such necessary courses, but recognizes that the departmental offerings listed in the college catalog represent an unrealistic view of faculty loads. The faculty sees no alternative but to teach overloads until additional tenure lines are added.

Accompanists:

Each student taking applied music lessons (except for piano) requires the services of an accompanist at each lesson. The department provides an accompanist to each student at no charge through the use of 1) qualified piano students on accompanying scholarships, 2) one half-time staff accompanist, funded by the department, and 3) local pianists hired through departmental funds. These three sources only provide roughly one-half the accompanists needed. Additional funds are needed to increase the staff accompanist to full time and to hire additional local pianists.

Scholarships:

A genuine need is the enlargement of music scholarship funds. College/university music programs exist in a competitive environment in which many schools court talented students financially. The department receives annual inquiries from talented students and would like to give them sufficient aid so they will choose to come to Whitman. Sources for this type of funding are private donations given specifically for this purpose.

Appraisal of Methods of Evaluation and Assessment

The Music Department uses the following criteria to measure the effectiveness of our program (most discussed in detail above).

1. Senior assessment in the major: The rigorous senior exam process gives the faculty an excellent indication of each major's areas of strength and weakness. It also helps the faculty identify areas of instruction that require improvement.

2. Success of graduates taking graduate school entrance exams: The extremely strong performance of our graduates suggests that the department's history and theory courses and *Senior Seminar* are highly effective and provide the background considered necessary by the nation's top graduate programs.
3. High enrollments in music classes: The fact that the music faculty is teaching at the very limit of its capacity in terms of time and resources indicates that the department's courses are judged effective and attractive by the students, both majors and non-majors.
4. Quality of performance by music ensembles: The success of the department's performing ensembles is indicated by 1) number of students enrolled in performing ensembles, 2) attendance at concerts, 3) invitations of our ensembles to participate in festivals and conventions (i.e.: The Whitman Chamber Singers were invited to perform at the American Choral Directors Association Regional Convention in 2000 and 2004. In the spring of 2006, the Whitman Chorale was invited by noted American composer Gwyneth Walker to produce a CD of her choral works. The Jazz Ensemble I regularly receives commendation at the Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival at the University of Idaho).
5. Quality of student performance at recitals: The pre-recital hearing procedure ensures that students are adequately prepared to present a public recital. Any deficiencies detected at the hearing are addressed and remedied before the recital is rescheduled.
6. Success of students at competitions/auditions for summer programs: Students' participation in regional and national music competitions (including competitions for entry into highly competitive summer music programs) provides an objective measure of the strength of the department's training. In the past few years, Whitman students have won the following young artist competitions: National Association of Teachers of Singing Regional Competition (voice), Music Teachers National Association National Competition (piano, voice), Washington-Idaho Symphony Competition (voice, piano), Mid-Columbia Symphony Competition (voice), Oregon East Symphony Competition (piano, voice), Spokane Symphony Competition (piano). Summer music programs attended by Whitman students include: Brevard Music Center (voice), Bel Canto Northwest (voice), Chautauqua Music Festival (piano and chamber music), SongFest (voice and accompanying), Opera Theater Program of Lucca, Italy (accompanying), Siegel Colony (voice)
7. Weekly faculty meetings: Faculty meetings provide the faculty with an ongoing opportunity to evaluate all aspects of the music program at Whitman. This weekly one-hour meeting is dedicated to the discussion of individual student's needs, department goals and areas of concern. Any curricular changes are thoroughly discussed in this setting before proposing them to the Division and full faculty.

Accreditation Self-Study
Department of Philosophy

I. Goals

The Philosophy Department's goals for its majors are twofold:

(i) introduce students to the history of the Western philosophical tradition through the four required courses at the heart of the major, 201: *Ancient Philosophy*, 202: *Medieval Philosophy*, 301: *Early Modern Philosophy*, and 302: *Kant and 19th Century Philosophy*;

(ii) help students learn how to ask and follow out a genuinely critical question.

The overall goal is to help a student master enough of the historical and critical dimensions of the Western philosophical tradition to take the first significant steps in learning how to think for him or herself. These first steps will be made manifest most particularly in the student's Senior Paper, and, where the department judges the Senior Paper of sufficient quality, its extension in his or her Honors Thesis (more on which below).

II. Description

Structure and curriculum

The Department is allocated 21 courses taught by four regular faculty with two of those faculty formally committed to teach in the year-long Core program. Since Core participation is "replaced," this allows the Department to add courses offered by two adjuncts to raise the number of courses offered each year to approximately 23.

Philosophy courses are divided into:

(i) service courses for a general liberal arts education (for which philosophy is especially appropriate given that developing the capacity for critical thought is a key component of a liberal arts education),

(ii) foundational courses for the major, both historical (e.g. 201: *Ancient Philosophy*) and problematic (e.g. 210: *Epistemology*),

(iii) advanced seminars in both figures and problems from the Western philosophical tradition (e.g. 310: *Plato's Republic*, 400: *Values*).

As mentioned above, the heart of the major is the required four course sequence in the history of philosophy: 201 *Ancient*, 202 *Medieval*, 303 *Early Modern*, and 304 *Kant and the 19th Century*. Majors also take two upper division courses in addition to 303 and 304, and two other courses of their own choice. The final requirements are the writing of a Senior Paper that can become an Honors Thesis (as explained below), taking a three-part written comprehensive examination in the history of philosophy, and finally an hour long integrative oral examination of their work in the major.

Commitment to interdisciplinary studies

Beyond work for either general education or the major, the Department is strongly committed to interdisciplinary studies at Whitman:

(i) The Department was instrumental in the formation of the current first-year Core program and played a pivotal role in creating and sustaining the *Alternative and Critical Voices* course.

(ii) Since the last accreditation report, two faculty have retired and been replaced. The job description for the second hire was modified to include a commitment to teach in Environmental Studies. This commitment was part of the Department's initiative to form a new major in Environmental Humanities that was approved in 2005-2006 as part of the overall Environmental Studies program. In addition this second hire regularly contributes to the Gender Studies major. Here it should be noted that a Philosophy professor took the initiative to create the

Introduction to Gender Studies course that established there was more than sufficient student interest to justify a Gender Studies major.

The above interdisciplinary work is, of course, in addition to work done in the “regular” major. Philosophy courses are also cross-listed in Art History, Classics, German Studies, and Race and Ethnic Studies. Whether this kind of multiplication of commitments can be maintained with a 3.5 FTE faculty allocation is questionable (see more below).

Enrollments

Historically, an average of 11 seniors graduate each year from a program with 20 to 25 declared majors. Current enrollment trends indicate this average could increase to 17 to 20 graduating senior from a program of 35 to 40 declared majors. With the hire in 2003 of the first regular tenure-track woman since 1986, the seventeen-year tendency for majors to be mostly men has changed to a better balance between men and women.

By the different statistical “measures” used to assess the overall workload of professors, the Department does well (see analyses in the Accreditation Exhibit Room). And, as noted above, we are a leader in promoting interdisciplinary work across Whitman’s academic Divisions.

Future plans

(i) In light of the replacement of half its regular members, in 2004-05 the Department reviewed the entire curriculum program. The review reaffirmed our commitment to anchoring the major in the history of the Western philosophical tradition. It also led to changes that were implemented in 2005-06. The written comprehensive examinations are now directly tied to the required history sequence within the major and the former Senior Thesis is now a Senior Paper due three weeks before the end of Fall semester. Then before the end of Fall semester, invitations are extended to those students whose Senior Paper has been judged of sufficient quality to expand into an Honors Thesis written in the Spring semester. During 2006-07, the Department will assess these changes.

(ii) To meet the demands of both a growing major and our commitments to interdisciplinary studies as outlined above, the Department will pursue a minimum three courses per year expansion of its disciplinary offerings in the future.

III. Assessment

The nature of “output assessment” in philosophy

Philosophy takes place through conversation in and outside of the classroom, and through writing. Most intensely this work takes place in one on one conversation, and in the different kind of “one on one conversation” that emerges between you and a blank piece of paper (or most often today a blank screen). Indeed, Plato was speaking from the kind of experience that founded the Western philosophical tradition when he described the work of philosophy as the “dialogue of the soul with itself in silence.” But if true, then just what will “output assessment” entail?

The appropriate model for “output assessment” in philosophy can be seen in how a student comes to write an Honors Thesis. By the end of the junior year, each major submits a proposal for his or her Senior Paper. The proposal sets out an insight provoked by previous work and an initial plan for how that insight can be followed out along with an annotated bibliography of summer reading. The Department reviews the proposals and determines which professor is best suited to direct each major’s Senior Paper. Professors and students then meet on a regular basis during the Fall. By Thanksgiving Break, the Department evaluates the completed Senior Papers, and those students whose work is judged of sufficient quality are invited to continue their work in an Honors Thesis in the Spring. If the student accepts this invitation, a commitment has been made to critically rethink and thereby further follow out those ever evolving initial insights. And if the completed Honors Thesis is again judged by the Department to be of sufficient quality, it is examined in an oral defense open to the public to which all majors are invited.

This process of setting out an initial insight and critically following it through is the very process at work in writing any good philosophy paper. Each of us in the Philosophy Department tries to stage such work in a variety of ways in every assignment in every class. In introductory courses, we might trace this process through the work of another philosopher to demonstrate just what philosophy involves. In other courses, we might encourage students to begin to critically take up the implications of their own insights. In advanced seminars, we might ask our students to work through the whole of this process in how they write a seminar paper, a paper that could itself generate the beginning of a major's Senior Paper.

With the above in mind, an especially appropriate way to understand the fundamental goal of the Philosophy Department would be to say: we work toward that time when each and every major will be invited to expand her or his Senior Paper into an Honors Thesis. Thus the best way to judge what it means for the Philosophy Department to work toward this goal is to examine specific examples of the succession between a student's Senior Paper and his or her Honors Thesis (see examples in the Accreditation Exhibit Room).

Institutional measures of success

Since the last accreditation report, the work of Philosophy majors (and faculty) has been regularly recognized by the College by way of 6 Perry Research Fellowships and 3 Abshire Awards for faculty-student collaborative work as well as some 25 presentations of work by majors at Whitman's Undergraduate Conference.

The role of student feedback in the Department's assessment of the major program

At the end of each year, the Department gets together with its graduating seniors to award the Soper Prize in Philosophy for a truly deserving Honors Thesis, and also give them a chance to look back over their experience in the major and tell us how they think we could make it better. Over the recent past this has led to the creation of 177: *Special Topics: Contemporary Problems for Thought* that offers faculty the chance to explore in seminar-style classes issues of special concern for both major and non-major students, for example, *Evil and Non-Violence*. Our last senior major gathering in May 2006 produced the suggestion that the Department reconsider its decision during its curriculum review of 2004-05 to drop the *Senior Seminar* in which seniors would share with each other their initial work on what was then called their Senior Thesis during the early weeks of Fall semester. In Fall 2006, the Department will consider the return of the *Senior Seminar*, and it is likely it will return for 2007-08.

And, as noted above, the Department has taken the initiative to translate strong student interest in interdisciplinary work in Environmental Humanities, Gender Studies, and now Political Philosophy into formal major programs.

Where do our majors go after graduation?

After time off, a majority of our majors go to law school. An average of one a year goes on to graduate work in Philosophy, though this may be increasing (we currently have 7 majors in doctoral programs in Philosophy). Since the last accreditation report less than a handful have gone on to medical school. The rest move on to a variety of possibilities in business and government (as well as NGOs, etc.). Increasingly both medical schools and businesses are interested in Philosophy majors, and for roughly the same reason: Philosophy majors have learned how to learn and thereby know how to critically assess and carefully articulate a problem as well as generate a variety of approaches to its possible resolution.

IV. Stepping back and reviewing the above

Since the last accreditation report, the Department has most significantly changed in the depth of its commitment to extending the work of philosophy into the interdisciplinary areas of Environmental Humanities, Gender Studies, and soon Political Philosophy, while also promoting the growth of the major itself. These extensions and that growth are the product of the intersection of faculty and student interests translated into concrete curricular innovations both inside and outside the Department that serve liberal arts education at Whitman as a whole.

Accreditation Self-Study
Department of Religion

Departmental Goals

The Religion Department seeks to provide students “religious literacy.” This involves a substantive/cognitive component (knowledge of the world’s religions and the religious aspects of culture) as well as a methodological component, i.e., theoretical and practical approaches relevant to the academic (as distinguished from confessional) study of religion. Students who enroll in one or two Religion courses should gain basic knowledge of one or two specific religious traditions and exposure to one or two approaches to the study of religion; students who pursue a minor in Religion should gain basic knowledge of several different religious traditions and exposure to several different methodological approaches; students who major in Religion should gain basic knowledge of all the religious traditions taught in the Department, should develop in-depth knowledge of at least two of them, and should cultivate a sophisticated substantive knowledge of one topic concomitant with a methodological approach of their own.

Description of the Department

During the last decade, the Religion department has grown substantially. At the time of our last accreditation report, we were a non-major department of three, with two tenure-track lines (in modern Western religious thought/theology and Asian religions/history of religions) and one renewable adjunct position in Religion in America. Two new positions subsequently have been created in Religion: Near Eastern religions (2001) and Gender and Religion/sociology of religion (2005). Both these new lines are tenure-track. Following the addition of the new line in Near Eastern religions, we successfully designed and gained faculty approval for a major in Religion, also in 2001; especially with the 2005 addition of the second new line, in Gender and Sociology of Religion, we are now able to offer broad-based and in-depth training in the academic study of religion consonant with the caliber of Whitman College’s other major programs.

The phenomenal expansion of the Religion department is borne out in our growing numbers of majors. Though the numbers of students choosing to minor in Religion has remained quite consistent (seven in 1995, six in 1996, four in 1998, three in 1999, two in 2000, three in 2001, three in 2002, four in 2004, two in 2005), the number of students choosing to major in Religion shows a sharp upward trend since the creation of the formal major program. Thus prior to implementing the formal major, only a handful of students majored in Religion or Religion combined with another discipline, all as Individually Planned Majors (IPM’s); one in 1995, two in 1997, one in 1998, two in 2001, three in 2002), but beginning with the first class to graduate under the new requirements, we had four majors in 2003, three in 2004, eight in 2005, eleven in 2006 and currently expect sixteen Religion majors in 2007 (the number for 2008 looks to be higher still). Our enrollments have also remained very high, despite our expectation that they would diminish after the creation of new general distribution requirements in 2002 which folded the former “Religion and Philosophy” distribution area into a more general “Humanities” one, and despite the fact that we have greatly increased the sheer number of Religion courses now being offered each semester. Between 2004 and 2006 more than 33% of all our courses were full or over capacity; the figure shoots up to 40% when considering only non-advanced (i.e., 100- and 200-level) courses. Student interest in the material we teach thus obviously remains strong, and despite an increased proportion of faculty resources now being dedicated to advanced offerings (see below), we continue to serve the general student body too.

The creation of a Religion major and expansion of our faculty and course offerings involved three significant areas of curricular change during the last several years. First, we changed our approach to introductory-level Religion courses. Prior to the creation of the major in 2001, we offered only one introductory-level course, *Introduction to Religion*, which functioned more as a service course for the (now defunct) College distribution requirements than as an entrée into the department’s other offerings. Realizing the need for introductory courses that better “feed” the major, we created a series of changing introductory courses under the rubric *Comparative Studies in Religion*. Offered at the 100 level and open only to first and second year students, these

small seminars examine an important facet of religion (specific offerings to date have included *Death and the Afterlife*, *Missionaries and Missionary Religion*, *Science and Religion*, *Nature and the Environment*, *Church and State*, *Conceptions of Ultimate Reality*, *Religious Diversity*, and *Religion and Society*) comparatively (focused on manifestations of that phenomenon in at least two major religious traditions) and critically (these seminars lead students more directly into methodological issues than did the old *Introduction to Religion*). We find that these courses have functioned as excellent entrees into the program, and may be partly responsible for the increasing numbers of majors we are witnessing.

Second, we dramatically expanded our course offerings, adding additional courses in Islam and introducing for the first time courses in Judaism, and adding new courses in Gender and Religion and the Sociology of Religion. Thus since 1997, the Department has changed shape dramatically: we continue to do what we did previously, but have broadened our attention to religious traditions and phenomena. We continue to distinguish surveys focused on one religion or religious area (200-level; such as, *The Hebrew Bible*, *The New Testament and Early Christianity*, *Introduction to Islam*, *Introduction to Judaism*, *Buddhist Civilizations in Asia*, *South Asian Religions*, *Interpretations of the Qur'an*, *Modern Western Religious Thought*, *Christian Ethics*, *American Religious Thought*, *Religion in America from Columbus to the Civil War*, *Religion in America from the Civil War to the Present*, *Queer Religiosities*, *Women and Religion in American History*, *Women in World Religions*) from more-specialized, advanced seminars (300-level; such as, *The Problem of God*, *Feminist and Liberation Theologies*, *Field Studies in the Religions of the Pacific Northwest*, *Judaism in the United States*, *Judaism Under Islam*, *Islam's Intellectual Encounter with the West*, *The Buddha*, *Religious Intolerance in the Contemporary U.S.*, and *Gender, Body and Religion*). We have also changed the nature and the function of the advanced (300-level) *Special Topics in Religious Literature, History, and Thought*. This is a variable topics course—topics are offered only once. Formerly, this course was always team-taught and functioned as a capstone course for IPM's in religion and religion minors. With the creation of the senior seminar in religion (see below), the Special Topics course no longer needs to perform this capstone function. So we reconceptualized it: we thought that there was a need in the curriculum for greater variety in advanced offerings in topics of special interest. The primary function of this seminar is now to diversify our advanced offerings in the various religious traditions studied in the department, to provide faculty with flexibility in pursuing topics of special interest, and to offer students additional options for advanced study. Examples of recent special topics seminars include *The Problem of the Historical Jesus*, *The Revisionist Theology of Hans Küng*, *Multireligious South Asia*, *Comparative Indo-European Epic*, *Religion, Oppression and Resistance* and *Sufism*. With the addition of two new faculty positions, we have now designed a coherent series of major requirements that draws students into our substantive areas and methodological approaches with breadth (all majors must take at least one 200- or 300-level course in each of the five main areas we cover: modern Western religious thought, American religions, Gender and the Sociology of Religion, Asian religions, Near Eastern religions) and depth (all majors must take at least two 300-level seminars in more specialized topics). Only one 100-level course counts toward the total 36 credits that constitute the major. This clarification for the major also allowed us to tweak the requirements for and thereby increase the coherence of the minor in Religion, which currently requires students to take a 200-level or 300-level course in at least three of the major areas we cover, and to take at least one advanced (300-level) course in one of those areas.

The third significant area of curricular change since our last accreditation report has been the reconfiguration of the senior year for Religion majors, including the implementation of new procedures for student assessment. Prior to 2003 our small handful of majors were all IPM's, some of which combined religion with another discipline (e.g. Religion and Philosophy, Religion and Literature, Religion and Gender Studies); each major program was worked out on an ad hoc basis. Seniors were required to write a Senior Thesis. With the creation of a Religion Major, we thought it necessary to provide a capstone course in which students could reflect critically on the academic study of religion as an academic discipline. We also thought that it was necessary to introduce the process of thesis writing in an orderly way. Prior to the creation of the major, we had no mechanism for systematically introducing thesis writing to our IPM's—we left this task entirely to each individual advisor. To accomplish these two goals, we created a new required course that will normally be taken

in the Fall semester of the Senior year: *Seminar in the Academic Study of Religion*. This course is intended to increase students' awareness of methodological issues in the academic study of religion, not only so that they will have a better understanding of the field of religion, but so that they will approach the task of writing their own theses with greater methodological sophistication and self-consciousness. Furthermore, the senior seminar, by setting up a series of milestones culminating in the composition of a formal thesis proposal due at the end of Fall Semester, guides students in the initial stages of the research and writing of the senior thesis. The process then culminates in the Spring of the Senior year, when students register for the *Thesis in Religion* or the *Honors Thesis in Religion*

Our training in Religious Studies also predisposes all the members of the Religion Department to participation in the wider intellectual life of the College. In addition to serving the general student body with our wide-ranging curriculum in Religion (non-majors vastly outnumber majors in most of our courses), all five members of the Department have taught in the *First Year Core: Antiquity and Modernity* program, three members of the Department have taught in the second-year *Critical and Alternative Voices* program, and three members of the Department are actively involved in the interdisciplinary programs Asian Studies and Gender Studies.

Assessment of Academic Program and Effectiveness

We employ a wide variety of assessment mechanisms – tests, papers, oral presentations, creative projects, journals, etc. – in our individual courses; these allow us to measure the levels of learning achieved by students from the general student body who take an occasional Religion course, including those who take sufficient Religion courses (five, with only one at the 100 level and at least one at the 300 level) to warrant a minor in Religion. Additional tools for assessing learning among students who major in Religion are integrated into the process that culminates in the Senior Thesis defense during the spring semester of each student's final year.

This process often begins during the second or third year, as Religion majors begin to think about possible Senior Thesis topics, sometimes in connection with study-abroad opportunities. At least by the conclusion of the senior seminar in Religion they will have decided upon a topic to research and will have conferred with the professor they choose to serve as thesis advisor as well as two more whom they recruit to serve as readers; moreover, they will have produced a proposal which includes a research question and preliminary bibliography. During the final week of the Fall semester each proposal is subjected to an oral examination by the three professors who serve on a particular thesis committee. The oral examination allows us not only to assess the degree to which they have prepared themselves to embark on thesis research and writing (it receives a grade as part of the final grade of senior seminar), but also to get them thinking about other possible substantive and methodological angles worth pursuing, to throw down red flags as necessary, and to provide general advice about the research and writing process. From that point on, in close collaboration with the thesis advisor (who reads drafts) and collaboration as necessary with other members of the committee, the student engages in intensive research and analysis meant to emulate professional scholarship in the field. That process itself figures into our final evaluation of the thesis; in grading (and awarding “honors” or “distinction” as appropriate, see below) we discuss the degree to which advice was put to use, sources were carefully and creatively interpreted, appropriate pace was kept, etc. We gain additional insight into the degree to which students majoring in Religion have become religiously literate – their mastery of the substantive topic they write about as well as their articulation of a viable methodological approach to it – in the quality of the written thesis itself (which is graded collectively by the members of the committee; an “A” or “A-“, if other College-wide requirements have been met, signals the awarding of “honors”) and most especially during an hour-long oral defense of the thesis conducted by the members of the committee (which is sometimes granted “distinction” depending upon its quality). From beginning to end, then, the process involves close work with each of our majors and on-going collaborative assessment of his or her achievement of “religious literacy.”

Assessment and Appraisal

Our last accreditation report concluded with a short paragraph about “Future Plans”:

Since the department has just made a major shift in curriculum [the 1994 redefinition of the

second tenure-track line, formerly defined as Bible/early Christianity, as the line in Asian religions/history of religions], we envisage the next five years as a period of assessment rather than of innovation. We need to decide whether the configuration of courses put in place in 1994 is the optimal way of meeting our goals. We would like to see the staffing issue addressed: converting the Religion in America position from a “general studies replacement position” to a regular tenure track position is our top priority. Such a change would have a major impact on the department’s definition, as it would make possible a major in Religion. Should the College commit the necessary resources to a third FTE in Religion, the department will turn to the task of implementing a Religion major.

The half-decade after this paragraph was written, 1996-2001, was indeed a period of assessment: one in which the then three members of the department tried out different topics in the team-taught capstone Special Topics course, shepherded a number of IPM’s in religion through the process of writing a senior thesis, and continued to make the case to the administration for the importance of creating a Religion Major. Our thinking was that it would take a minimum of three tenure-track positions in the department to offer a respectable, if not exactly comprehensive, major; thus, we were unwilling to propose a major which, although based on three faculty members, had (due to General Studies commitments) only two FTE’s in Religion. The intellectual basis for our case for a religion major rested on the claim that religion, even in a supposedly post-modern age, shows great resilience, and continues to provide the substance of many cultures, to inform their ultimate values and political aspirations—and thus to continue to lie at the basis of many deadly conflicts. At the time of our last accreditation report we were imagining—and only imagining—a possible future major based on three areas (Asian Religions, Modern Western Religious Thought, Religion in America).

Fortunately, the aspirations of the Religion Department coincided with the broader institutional priorities of Whitman College. The Religion Department had already (in 1994) taken a decisive step in the direction of internationalizing the Whitman curriculum by redefining the position in New Testament that came open due to a retirement as Asian Religions/History of Religions. It is simply inadequate to the realities of a multi-religious world to have a Religion Department limited to Christian studies. In their quest to further internationalize the curriculum, the Dean and Division Chairs asked what an entirely new tenure line in the Religion Department should look like. It was obvious to us—even before the events of 9/11—that the one huge gap in our offerings was the Near Eastern traditions—Islam and Judaism. Our proposal for a new tenure line in these areas was accepted by the administration. The position in Islam and Judaism was created, a Religion major consisting of four areas (Asian Religions, Near Eastern Religions, Religion in America, and Modern Western Religious Thought) became a reality. Thus our modest aspiration to convert the position in Religion in America to a full-time, tenure track position was replaced and fulfilled by something more pressing for the institution. Finally, during the 2004-2005 academic year, yet another expansion of the religion department (by 1/3 FTE) became possible, again due to the fortuitous intersection of Religion Department aspirations and institutional priorities: it became possible to add a position in Gender and Religion/Sociology of Religion. This position serves to shore up the interdisciplinary Gender Studies program while expanding the methodological perspectives in the Religion Department and adding a fifth content area to the department’s offerings. Each stage in the process of the transformation of the Religion Department—meetings among ourselves and with administrators, reports, job descriptions and searches, designing the new curriculum through numerous department meetings and email exchanges – brought the existing Religion faculty together to assess how best to achieve our general objective of cultivating religious literacy at Whitman.

This process, of course, has involved all sorts of ins-and-outs as we have wrestled with questions such as how best to balance continuing service to the general student body with the obvious need for more upper-level, specialized courses aimed at majors, or how to guarantee proper coverage of major requirements despite Whitman’s generous sabbatical policy (we have tried simultaneously to maximize the potential this mechanism provides for further diversifying our substantive and methodological range while nevertheless adequately covering required major courses). Most recently our discussions have been dominated by assessment of the

successes and failures of senior seminar, reflected in instructors' experiences and student evaluations as well as our assessment of the quality of senior theses. Those discussions have produced changes in the syllabus as well as the composition of a new document clarifying departmental expectations, deadlines, procedures and standards, which will be distributed to senior majors at the beginning of the course. We hope in particular that this will help mitigate the problematic last-minute-ness evident in several of this year's theses; toward that end, the document institutes a new stage in the thesis process, a "Midterm Review" conducted by the members of the committee just before Spring Break, which will give us an opportunity to formally assess student progress between the initial proposal and final defense. These discussions also helpfully allowed us as a department to think through and clarify our own standards and procedures for awarding honors on theses and distinction on oral defenses. Simultaneously, they opened up what will be a problem for us to face in the coming years, especially if the increase in our number of majors continues to be exponential, namely how to manage the increasing load created by the thesis process (thesis advising, oral defenses, reading drafts, etc. are all conducted as an overload in addition to our regular teaching and advising loads).

This sort of close, collaborative self-assessment and response which since our last accreditation report has transformed Religion from a marginal service department into a dynamic and growing major program is not limited to "big issues" like creating majors and getting new tenure-track lines. Rather, and perhaps more importantly, it characterizes the daily operations of our department. Individually, each of us rethinks our classes (or prepares them anew) on the basis of her or his own on-going assessment of where those classes are heading, what has worked or not in the past, and with new insights from the active scholarly lives each of us leads (which will be apparent in the appended faculty CVs); the whole department enjoys a strong reputation for teaching excellence as a result, and two members of the department have already won Whitman's annual teaching award in the Humanities. Collectively, through regular meetings both formal and informal as well as virtually daily departmental email exchanges, we collaborate to make decisions about everything from sometimes very small individual student problems to policy proposals and sabbatical schedules.

While at this writing we look back on the decade since our last accreditation report with a sense of real accomplishment and strength, we recognize that the vitality of the program requires just this sort of on-going, self-critical assessment. Thus, for example, we recently were confronted with a certain structural problem in integrating our newest area into the structure of the major program. Given her commitment to General Studies and Gender Studies, the professor in question will be teaching fewer Religion courses per year than do the rest of us; how could we fully include her fifth area in the general major requirements without increasing the size of the major beyond the allowable limit and guarantee that courses in this fifth area would be available with sufficient regularity? Our solution was to alter the original language of the major, which required students to take specific 200-level courses in order to fulfill the area distribution. Instead, as mentioned, they now can "double dip" by taking a 300-level course in a particular area to cover the area distribution as well as the advanced-level course requirement. This was a difficult decision that we had to wrestle with, because the 200 level courses give a certain breadth which is not guaranteed in 300 level courses. But we decided that the larger breadth question – fully integrating Gender and Sociology of Religion into the major as one of its five areas – outweighed these concerns; in 300-level courses there is still considerable substantive knowledge gained, and likely even deeper insight into methodology (we realized that the extreme case of a student taking all of her or his "area" courses at the 300 level would not necessarily be a bad thing!). During the next year we will be testing the new procedures document we produced as a result of our most recent discussions about the structure of the senior seminar. We look forward to on-going assessment *and* innovation during the coming decade, as we mature as a department and, if existing trends are any indication, become increasingly popular as a major.

Accreditation Self-Study
Department of Rhetoric and Film Studies

A. Program Goals

As a department, our primary goal is to ensure that students become better at critically analyzing communication, including but not limited to speeches, writing of all kinds, and various forms of media. We encourage a diversity of analytic approaches and we encourage students to articulate their ideas in writing, in oral presentations, and with the use of different forms of communicative technologies, such as Power Point, audio software, or digital video. In our department, students study and use a wide variety of methodological approaches, thus allowing them to experience a well-rounded liberal arts undergraduate experience focused on the history, theory, and criticism of film and rhetoric/public argument that prepares them to compete and succeed in our changing technological, multicultural world.

B. Program Description

Whitman has a long tradition in the area of rhetoric and public argument. For all of the last century the College supported instruction in things like public address, persuasion, and competitive forensics (debate). The department originally was called the *Speech Department*, indicating the primary focus of this “teaching area” where all courses helped fulfill the College’s “language, writing and rhetoric” distribution requirement. Put rather simply, the original purpose of the program, dating back to the early days of the College, focused on instruction in a rather small set of skills involving organizing and presenting material in an oral format. This instructional component was supplemented with a competitive forensics program, including intra- and inter-collegiate competition.

Beginning in the fall of 1980, the College decided to expand its offerings and enhance its competitive program by hiring Professor Robert Withycombe as the first full-time tenure track faculty member in the department in almost 11 years. He immediately added rhetorical theory and history courses to the more traditional performance offerings. In 1992 the College added Professor Jim Hanson to take over direction of the competitive forensics program and offer additional courses in theory and criticism. In 1997 the department changed its name to *Rhetoric and Public Address*, to more accurately reflect our shift in emphasis to include more attention to the history of rhetoric and the criticism of non-discursive communicative practices, including a focus on a much broader range of symbolic events than the term “speech” implies. In 1997 we began offering a minor that allowed interested students to develop a course of study that involved a combination of performance (public address and forensics), and history, theory, and criticism.

Over the last several decades, persuasive rhetoric has expanded well beyond the conventional spoken and written message, which has resulted in the increasing pervasiveness of film, video, TV, and the Internet as avenues for rhetorical studies. To reflect these advances in technology and understanding, the department requested a third tenure track professor, and in 2001 we hired Professor Robert Sickels who brought to the department specialization in film production, history, criticism, and popular culture. We also changed the name of the department to *Rhetoric and Film Studies* to better reflect our broader interests.

As a result of this expansion, the creation of “critical mass” and substantial student demand, beginning in the fall of 2003 the department added a major in Rhetoric and Film Studies (RFS) to our existing minor. We designed a major that we believe focuses on the uses of language and image to characterize social reality, to debate and confront controversies, and to aid in the transformation of social institutions. It is intended to be a major that enriches understanding of the complexity of contemporary communication by providing a solid grounding in the theory, history, production, interpretation, and criticism of a wide variety of written, oral, visual, and filmic texts. By their very nature, interdisciplinary programs tend to be less clearly structured than more conventional departmental majors, but we believe the RFS major is a cohesive interdisciplinary program that both utilizes the abilities of the individual professors and contributes to the greater mission of the college. While most of the departmental offerings continue to satisfy various distribution requirements, the creation

of a major necessitated the creation of a senior capstone course in the criticism of rhetoric and film, and the addition of a thesis requirement and thesis course. Both the major and minor are open to any student with a sincere interest in public advocacy, popular culture, and about 2,500 years of rhetorical history and criticism.

At present, the members of the department represent several different interests and a variety of teaching specialties, consistent with the design of both the major and our overall vision of what an interdisciplinary department should offer. For example, our department expects students to study the history, theory, and criticism of various forms of public argument (including the kinds of arguments carefully embedded in film), and to also be competent practitioners of a set of public advocacy and film making skills. As a result, Professor Hanson teaches courses that focus heavily on performance and criticism: *Public Address, Argumentation, Political Campaign Rhetoric, Rhetorical Criticism, and Race, Class, and Gender* courses in addition to directing the Forensics Program and teaching its courses (see the Debate self-assessment). Professor Withycombe teaches courses that focus less heavily on performance, but involve more history and theory: *Freedom of Speech and the First Amendment, African American Protest Rhetoric, Greek and Roman Rhetorical History and Theory, History of American Public Address, and Persuasion and Social Movements*. Professor Sickels' teaching areas span the entire range from film performance to history, theory, and criticism: introductory and advanced film making, historical periods in film, major figures in film, and film genre analysis. His offerings are supplemented by offerings by faculty in other departments which are cross listed with RFS, including *Introduction to French Cinema, Nazi Film and its Legacy, Pedro Almodovar's Spain, The Literature and Film of the Holocaust in France, Reel Cities: Latin American Film, German Film, and Environmental Writing and Rhetoric in the American West*. In addition, several of Hanson and Withycombe's courses are cross listed with the Classics, Gender Studies, Race and Ethnic Studies, and the Politics Departments—indicating their interdisciplinary nature. All three professors serve on senior thesis committees within the department, and both Withycombe and Hanson serve on thesis committees in several other departments.

The basic requirements for the RFS minor are rather simple: 20 credits (5 courses), including at least one advanced course in film history and criticism and one advanced course in rhetorical history and criticism. These two requirements prevent students from an overly narrow focus that only explores one aspect of the interdisciplinary program. In addition, students who are primarily interested in competitive forensics may count only 4 credits toward the minor, thus precluding the possibility that the minor would essentially constitute a “minor in debate.” We believe our requirements guarantee some movement through the different components of the department, and that when students have completed the minor they have met our goal of expanding the student's awareness, appreciation, and critical insights into a broad range of discursive and non-discursive rhetorical practices. At the same time, we recognize that the minor on the transcript is probably more of a statement to future employers and graduate schools than it is a statement of the depth and intensity of a student's work in RFS.

The requirements for the RFS major are more complex: 34 credits (8 courses plus a thesis), including a required introduction to film course which constitutes the gateway course into the major, advanced courses in both film studies and rhetorical history and criticism, a capstone course in the criticism of film and rhetoric, a thesis to be completed in the fall semester of the senior year, and an oral defense of the thesis. Students are allowed to import up to two courses from other departments or programs. This allows students on foreign studies programs to transfer credit directly into the major. For example, a current student studying in Galway transferred in a course in English Cinema and Media Studies, and another student studying in New Zealand transferred in two courses in New Zealand Cinema and New French Cinema.

The RFS major was designed based on several academic models already approved by the Whitman faculty. Our requirement structure is very similar to Anthropology, Gender Studies, Politics, and Sociology, where students are given considerable flexibility to work with an advisor to plan a course of study that contains breadth through the required gateway course and our own internal distribution courses, and sufficient depth through focused upper division study that will lead to the completion of a significant thesis.

Given the small size of the department, it is virtually impossible for students to “major in Withycombe” and it is equally impossible to avoid taking courses from any one member of the department.

C. Assessment of Rhetoric and Film Studies and its Effectiveness

(1) Program Assessment

The faculty approved our request for a new major in 2003 following a lengthy debate over the desirability and need for this interdisciplinary major. The faculty in the department believes that the major reflects several cultural and intellectual advances that have occurred over the last several years that demonstrate the value of intellectual engagement with film, popular culture, and public argument. The department has been instrumental in making film and public advocacy something more than “mere entertainment” on the campus. The various cinema arts programs hosted by the department and the forensic events, while sometimes burdensome for the campus, nevertheless constitute a significant contribution to the vitality of the community. Both the film and forensic aspects of the department are significant recruiting vehicles for the College and in many ways, represent unique strengths for Whitman. The merging of these two elements with the more theoretical aspects of the departmental offerings make RFS a vibrant and challenging major, as well as a worthwhile addition to the overall academic program.

Students who elect to major in RFS tend to be students with interests in film—perhaps 70% of our majors write senior theses about some aspect of contemporary film (prior to the creation of the major they might have been English majors). The remaining 30% of our students are interested in public argument and write senior theses about some aspect of contemporary social or political conflict (prior to the creation of the major they might have been Politics majors). Given this profile of our students, it’s easy to see that the major fits an interdisciplinary niche somewhere between the Humanities and the Social Sciences. The department’s ability to straddle this divide is a significant reason for the success of the major; the three faculty members in RFS all have interdisciplinary backgrounds, and we expect our students to be able to move across the more traditional dividing lines that used to separate departments.

Since its creation in 2003, the department has undergone a couple of small changes that have been initiated in response to things we experience — the kind of things all new majors probably experience. For example, we initially allowed majors to present an original film as a substitute for the thesis. It took only one film project that was truly mediocre to demonstrate that the department lacked the support/technical services needed, and that the students involved lacked the ability and probably sophistication to commit the huge number of hours required to make a film that would meet our expectations. While the elimination of the project option displeased some students, we decided that it was an inappropriate requirement for a program that is not housed in a film school environment.

A second change was the elimination of the P-D-F option for grading. Our department decided that students should be required to perform at higher levels than the P-D-F option seems to promote.

Finally, many of our students elect to complete second majors, usually in Politics or English. These combinations seem to be extremely appealing to students interested in graduate study in the Humanities or future professional study in law. We intentionally decided to require students to write their RFS thesis during the fall semester in order to allow many of them to write a second thesis for some other department. We believe this arrangement has been extremely satisfactory and has significantly expanded student options.

(2) Course Assessment

Every course offered in the department is regularly modified to reflect advances in theory or content, and to meet the needs of a new and growing major (we assume this is true for all offerings at Whitman). We spend a lot of time talking to one another in trying to determine the best possible ways to make our classes connected and cohesive, despite the RFS major’s interdisciplinary nature. To do so, we have all modified our approaches at various times to ensure that what we teach is transferable to other classes in the major that we don’t teach.

For example, Professor Withycombe discontinued a *Contemporary Rhetorical History* course in order to allow Hanson to develop a *Rhetorical Criticism* course that covered most of the same theorists, but was more appropriate for the major and more accessible to a broader range of students. In turn, Professor Hanson changed his *Rhetorical Criticism* course into *Rhetoric and Film Criticism* and redesigned it to meet the needs of our required exit course. The course now features a film criticism essay almost every class session. In addition, Hanson brings clips of films into the class for use as artifacts for utilizing the course's critical approaches. Professor Sickels has greatly increased the amount of theory included in his film studies classes so that students will have some background in it when they take the much more theoretically intensive classes offered by Professors Withycombe and Hanson.

Not only has course content changed to make the courses more connected and appropriate for a major, but we also have changed our methods on a regular basis. For example, Professor Sickels' *Film Production* courses have moved more and more toward "Hollywood professionalism." Students work in teams—something they frequently don't enjoy, but that's how films are usually made. Each team must produce an original film; they write, direct, film, edit, and present their final film, but Sickel's most recent innovation reflects life in the "real world." A script written by one group is assigned to another group to film the project, this film is then turned over to another group for editing, and it might be reassigned to an additional group for a complete revision. In short, while students learn the basics of film production, they also have to learn to work within clusters of students on projects not of their own design. The frustration associated with this kind of fractured production schedule reflects an important aspect of life in the film industry.

The department also attempts to respond to changes that have occurred in other departmental offerings. For example, Withycombe's *African American Protest Rhetoric* course has changed substantially in the last few years, partly because his interests have evolved, but partly because of faculty changes on the larger campus. When he first offered the course in 1993, there were no regularly offered English, Sociology or History courses that focused exclusively on the experience of African Americans. As a result, Withycombe's course was a rather sweeping survey of about 300 years of African American rhetorical history. Since that time, other departments have added faculty and offerings, and Withycombe has been able to narrow his focus substantially. Roughly half of what used to be covered (1619 to the Civil War) has been eliminated, and the remaining material has been expanded. Completely new materials that focus on presidential addresses have been added: Truman on the NAACP, Eisenhower on "extremists," Kennedy on the "moral crisis" of racism, Johnson on the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act, and so forth. Students are now encouraged to write final papers that address various (mis)representations of African Americans in film and on television.

Additionally, since the department allows two courses offered by other departments to be imported into our major, we have created intellectual and theoretical connections across department lines. When members of the Foreign Languages and Literatures Department decide to offer courses that focus on cinema, they discuss their course design and film screenings with us. We are able to better advise our students as a result.

(3) Student Assessment

In a general sense, the three members of the department evaluate student work very much like other college faculty, but because our offerings span the range from pure performance to pure theory/criticism, our methods of evaluation have to be flexible. In short, we evaluate individual students on a course-by-course basis, and only in the case of RFS majors do we consider the overall record of the individual student—to graduate with honors in RFS implies that the student has consistently performed at levels that are well above the norm. In all cases, the faculty members expect written work to demonstrate the kinds of thoughtful and creative analysis and style you would expect from English majors, the kind of critical analysis of current events that you would expect from a Politics major, and the kind of impressive performances that you would expect from a Theatre major or an Art major.

Since each of the three members in the department teaches almost exclusively within his areas of specialization, we are quite comfortable teaching as well as evaluating our student's work. Professor Hanson

(Ph.D. Communication Arts and Sciences, University of Southern California, 1999) has expertise in legal rhetoric and argumentation theory. Accordingly, he teaches a number of public address and debate courses, as well as *Rhetorical Explorations: Race, Class, and Gender; Argument in the Law and Politics; Rhetoric and Film Criticism*, and serves as a Thesis Advisor and the Debate coach. Professor Hanson's classes stress the ability to use argumentation and rhetorical theory as a way to engage in and critique political and social argument. Hanson had developed a very extensive system of interaction with students that relies on rough drafts, direct feedback, revisions, presentations, videotape records of all presentations, and extensive post-presentation evaluations. Courses such as *Public Address* are not intended to be exceptionally difficult (just standing in front of a critical audience is difficult enough for most people), but the quantity of improvement in speaking skills is usually remarkable. The increasing quality of the presentations throughout the course of the semester is one indicator, and reviewing the student's videotapes between the beginning presentation and the final presentation easily demonstrates the extent of student improvement.

In Hanson's other courses, students are introduced to a variety of theoretical conceptions of argument and rhetorical theory. Students meet with Hanson before presentations to review their approach so that they cover key material, are ready to respond to questions, and present in an effective manner. Such meetings and essay reviews are also the norm for papers in these courses with Hanson providing extensive feedback concerning organization, support for claims, grammar, and contribution to the issue the paper addresses.

Professor Sickels' (Ph.D. Film Studies, University of Nevada, 1999) areas of expertise include Film Studies, Popular Culture, and American Literature. He teaches *Introduction to Film Studies, Major Figures in Film, Studies in Film Genre*, the Intro and Advanced level filmmaking classes, and serves as a Thesis Advisor. These classes are all consistently full and all fulfill a distribution requirement (Humanities for the Film Studies courses and Fine Arts for the filmmaking courses). The primary skills taught in the film studies courses are the ability to critically analyze specific films and/or trends in film history and/or popular culture both in writing and through an oral presentation with multimedia aids. Similarly, in the filmmaking courses, the primary skill taught is the ability to make a narrative film in such a way as to make the story clear and convincing to an audience. In the film studies courses, students are encouraged to meet with Sickels repeatedly to go over their essays and/or presentations so that he can help them to best formulate and postulate their contentions. Extensive guidelines are given to students that help them to understand what it is that is required of them and how he assesses their work. He also spends extensive time helping students learning to use various kinds of technology for their presentations, including but not limited to Final Cut Pro, Power Point, DVD Studio Pro, and Soundtrack Pro. Students are ultimately assessed in accordance to a version of the following document, which he tailors to individual courses as necessary:

The filmmaking classes are particularly challenging to teach in that Sickels is not only trying to teach them the art of making films (especially as concerns the construction of narratives), but the craft as well, which means he spends as much of their time talking about how to use the hardware (cameras, lights, mics, etc.) and software (Final Cut Pro, Soundtrack Pro, etc.) required to make a film as he does the art part (screenwriting in particular). In *Introduction to Film* students typically make 5 short films (3 to 5 minutes), with each successive film adding a new component of the process (e.g. lights, sound, multiple camera set-ups, etc.), which means each film is a little more accomplished and technically savvy than the last. In *Advanced Film* students make one longer short (15 to 20 minutes) in which they use all of the elements that they learned in Intro to Film. Both courses end with public screenings of students' work, which are always a great experience and a real opportunity for the students (and their professor) to judge how their films play to a live audience.

Professor Withycombe (Ph.D., Rhetoric and Communication, University of Oregon, 1989) has expertise in a variety of areas, including rhetorical history and criticism, persuasion, public argumentation, freedom of speech, and civil rights. Accordingly, he teaches *Public Address; Persuasion, Agitation and Social Movements; Freedom of Speech and the First Amendment; Rhetoric in Early Western Culture; Rhetoric and Film Criticism; African American Protest Rhetoric*; and various special topics course, and serves as a Thesis Advisor.

Withycombe's classes stress intellectual values similar to those outlined above. Withycombe intends for his students to understand in rather broad terms, some of the major themes in the Western rhetorical tradition, beginning with the pre-Socratic thinkers and moving through modern rhetorical theorists and critics such as Foucault and Kenneth Burke. Withycombe tends to be more of a rhetorical historian than either Hanson or Sickels, and his classes and research interests demonstrate this.

Withycombe's courses are graded either on performance based standards (*Public Address*), or through essay assignments, or through some combination of the two. His standards of evaluation for oral work correspond very closely with the material describing Hanson's approach to oral assignments, and his written assignments correspond very closely to the material describing Sickels' approach—both outlined above.

The final piece of work required of all RFS majors is a scholarly article length senior thesis on a subject of their choice. This is an extensive process and allows students to show that they are able to synthesize what they have learned in posing a thesis and supporting it in a sustained and critically appropriate approach. All students have thesis advisors with whom they work closely every step of the way. In addition, every thesis has a secondary reader from the department available for further consultation. In addition to the final written piece, students are then required to orally defend their thesis in front of the committee, which then decides, on the basis of the merit of the written and oral work in positing and defending a thesis, if it is a passing or failing project. The members of the department regularly discuss the nature of this final project. As noted above, we decided to eliminate the "film project" option, based on our experience with unsuccessful projects. We also regularly discuss the dimensions of the final thesis—and we are not in complete agreement. The three of us all have slightly different expectations, and our student advisees undoubtedly know that, but we have no indication that they select a thesis advisor based on this information. We all agree that the minimum length/quality standard should be roughly equal to what we find in our professional journals but we have not established maximum length rules. We also have slightly different expectations for the role theory should play in criticism. Film criticism is frequently less theory driven than rhetorical criticism, and as a result, we are willing to provide some flexibility in this area as well.

In sum, the department fills an important intellectual space, an important interdisciplinary space, and meets several perceived needs and interests of our students. It reflects the liberal arts' traditional concern for ways of knowing and understanding by asking students to consider how rhetoric and film help create, challenge, and/or change existing social and political structures. It also demands that our students be active practitioners of the arts—in all our courses performance is a central expectation, not merely an optional activity. To graduate with a degree in Rhetoric and Film Studies, students need to have a well rounded understanding of this rather broad discipline, and be able to articulate their depth of understanding about a specific aspect of the discipline through the completion of a thesis and an oral defense of that thesis. As our major ages, we anticipate that we will continue to change our expectations and revise our offerings to better meet the changing discipline and our student's needs and abilities.

(4) Facilities Assessment

Unlike many other departments, RFS has a unique set of needs that result from the kind of courses we teach and the ways our students learn. Virtually every classroom we use has to be a "smart classroom." We need a high-end screening room. We need dedicated film editing lab space. And we need work spaces and computers for the members of the forensics program.

In general, the infrastructure for the department is adequate, but it could be improved in a number of ways. Perhaps the most pressing current need for Professor Sickels is the addition of a dedicated computer lab specifically for his filmmaking students' use. Currently Sickels' students use the general all-campus student lab, which has six stations that are available on a first come, first serve basis. Six workstations for multi-media creation for the entire school are woefully inadequate and the shortage is compounded by the competition for the stations created by courses requiring media creation. Media creation requires inordinate amounts of

time and energy, as well as computers with much faster processors and greater memory than one needs for more simple word-processing kinds of tasks. The rule of thumb for filmmaking is every one-minute of finished film requires eight hours of editing, which is about right. So if Professor Sickles has 5 filmmaking groups that ultimately produce 20 minutes of finished film, that's 160 hours of editing time per group and 800 hours total. This creates huge amounts of competition for the few machines we have. In addition to a six station lab exclusively for use by Sickels' filmmaking students, the lab would require full technical support when things go awry with the computers, as they invariably do. If the new lab is adjacent to a larger all campus lab (both of which we've proposed be located in the basement of Hunter Conservatory), this would be easily achieved. The director of Instructional Media Services, who currently oversees the existing lab, could easily oversee the maintenance of the RFS lab computers. And we would hope that an expanded IMS lab and new RFS lab would also result in the hiring of at least one more dedicated full-time professional lab tech for the Hunter Conservatory media suite.

We also are in need of nearly continual maintenance and technological updating in the two primary classrooms in Hunter—the Kimball Auditorium and Hunter 107. Both of these spaces are essential to the proper functioning of the department, and both were intended to be state-of-the-art facilities when Hunter was remodeled in 1999. The auditorium is Professor Sickels' primary teaching area, and is used by him and the community as a premier screening facility and public presentation/lecture space. As such, it is essential that it have "theatre quality" sound and projection equipment as well as computer generated information technology. Hunter 107 is the primary classroom for Professors Hanson and Withycombe, and was designed to be a teaching facility for public address (i.e., presentation software such as PowerPoint, computer and projection equipment, digital and video recording, internet access, CD/DVD/VHS equipment, etc.). The room's equipment has recently been updated but funding and support for future technological changes should be an institutional priority. The members of the RFS Department are working with WCTS and the Instructional Media personnel, but keeping these teaching areas maintained and updated is an ongoing problem that will require commitment and resources.

D. Ongoing departmental revisions and self-study

The success of our majors to date provides outside validation of the effectiveness of our program. We have had students accepted to graduate study in either film studies and/or filmmaking at every major film school in the country, including USC, NYU, The University of Texas, Wisconsin, and UCLA. Were the work they are doing at Whitman somehow inadequate, they wouldn't be getting into the caliber of schools that they are. As a testament to the strength of the interdisciplinary nature of our program, students typically more focused in the rhetoric courses are also routinely getting into the best law schools in America, including Yale, Georgetown, Michigan, Berkeley, Minnesota, and Pennsylvania. Some students are also entering some of the finest rhetoric programs as well, including the University of Southern California, Long Beach State University, Pennsylvania State University and the University of Utah. Those students who choose to enter the working world after graduation also are doing well. They work in a variety of professions, including environmental consulting, marketing and advertising, teaching, and as editors and set designers for movies.

The major strengths of the RFS department are the breadth and diversity of courses offered and the teaching and scholarly strength of the faculty. We continue to draw excellent majors and we envision our department continuing to grow. In 2003, our first year, we had 4 graduates, followed by 8 in 2004, 12 in 2005 and 8 again in 2006. Perhaps the biggest challenge facing our department is the ability to handle our growth in a sustained way without overwhelming our resources. We have taken great pains to ensure that the major is truly interdisciplinary and that students aren't signing on to exclusively study either Rhetoric or Filmmaking. We have structured our major so that students take courses in all the areas we offer, and RFS faculty individually stress the importance of doing so. This has resulted in our being able to attract students to the major who are truly interested in an interdisciplinary approach. The courses we offer are very popular, and in addition to providing a strong major offering, they help strengthen the general education program at Whitman. Virtually all entry level courses are full and have waiting lists every semester. Upper division classes are intended to be

more narrowly focused, and as a result, are almost always at capacity, but there are adequate spaces for non-major students who have a sincere interest in our disciplines.

Of the utmost importance for our department to successfully face the current enrollment pressures and the ever-expanding boundaries of the discipline will be the addition of another tenure line faculty member sometime in the next few years. This addition will allow us the ability to continue offering a wide number of courses for a growing number of majors. It will also allow us to develop new courses in areas such as Popular Culture and Mass Media—areas we currently can't cover, but should be covered under our department's umbrella. We are an extremely young and innovative program, but the success of our program to date gives us high hopes for continued success and growth in the future.

Accreditation Self-Study Speech and Debate

The Speech and Debate Team has been a part of Whitman College since at least 1897 when oratory and then debating contests the next year were held. The program was first housed in the English department, then was part of the Speech department when that split from the English department in 1947. Today, the debate team is an important part of the Rhetoric and Film Studies department. It is a signature program of the college, where some of Whitman's best and brightest couple thorough research with precise presentational skills against some of the best minds from Harvard, Dartmouth, Northwestern, UC Berkeley, Texas-Austin, Emory, and Wake Forest, among others.

1. What are the goals of the Debate program?

There are four goals of the debate program.

- Students learn about current issues encompassing salient national and international conflicts, actors, and theories.
- Students exhibit excellent speaking skills including clear, persuasive, and engaging communication.
- Students develop research skills including searching for and finding relevant printed and electronic material.
- Students learn argumentation skills, including the ability to construct well supported arguments and to refute, rebuild, and synthesize those arguments.

2. General Description of the Program

Our program participates in policy debate, parliamentary debate, and individual events.

- Policy debate features two person teams that debate a topic for an entire year. It is an extremely intense activity requiring at least 10 and usually more hours of research each week, rapidly conceived and presented responses, and in-depth topic and debate theory knowledge.
- Parliamentary debate features two person teams that argue a different topic each debate. This event requires a breadth of knowledge about international and national issues, 4 to 8 hours of research each week, and strong speaking skills.
- Individual Events features students speaking without a partner and not in argument with another team. Students can compete in a wide variety of individual events such as extemporaneous, impromptu, persuasion, informative, after dinner speaking, communication analysis, poetry, prose, dramatic interpretation, programmed oral interpretation, and duo interpretation. Each of these events requires skill in presentation as well as effective preparation in constructing an engaging speech.

The program is directed by Jim Hanson with the help of two assistant coaches. Hanson structures the course, submits tournament entries, schedules drills and debates, plans travel, watches drills and debates, judges at tournaments, and manages tournaments that Whitman hosts. The assistants handle research assignments, watch drills and debates, judge debates at tournaments, and assist with tournaments that Whitman hosts. Students engage in research, preparation of cases, manuscripts, and interpretation cuttings, speaking drills, practice debates and presentations. Students travel to tournaments in the Northwest and at select tournaments throughout the nation. At these tournaments, students compete against competitors from many other colleges and universities.

3. Assessment of academic program and its effectiveness

The program is achieving great success. We are regularly in the top 10 policy debate squads in the nation based on the Cross Examination Debate Association (CEDA) sweepstakes and National Debate Tournament (NDT) ranking systems. We are regularly among the top programs in the Northwest based on the Northwest Sweepstakes System and the Northwest Forensics Conference Sweepstakes. We have been among the top 25 programs for ten years in a row with the National Parliamentary Debate Association (NPDA) Sweepstakes and we have qualified at least one team each and every year to the select National Parliamentary Tournament of Excellence (NPTE).

This year, our program set a new record at the CEDA Nationals tournament by advancing all 6 of our teams into elimination rounds including a team in quarterfinals. This success continues our record of having teams in elimination rounds at CEDA Nationals for 14 consecutive years. At the NDT, we had two teams in octafinals. We also advanced four teams into elimination rounds at the NPDA Championship. No other school the size of Whitman College can claim more competitive success.

Jim Hanson, the Director of the program, has an M.A. and Ph.D. in Rhetoric and Communication Arts. He is the author of several debate and speaking textbooks. He is the editor of over one hundred books with debate and speaking material. He serves as the NDT Rankings Director, Northwest CEDA Representative, NPTE President, and is selected to judge some of the best debate teams in the country, including being a preferred critic for the 2006 CEDA National Championship finals. Hanson served as the tournament director at six tournaments this year. Each tournament ran on schedule and received excellent reviews by participants.

The program Jim directs is large, especially for a school the size of Whitman College. We had 28 students regularly participating throughout the 2005-06 year and about 20 additional students that participated at a low level. As well, the program sponsored the Dovell-Gose oratory contest featuring 17 contestants and the Intramural Debates which featured 70 contestants participating in debates in the fall and spring.

Students work exhaustively preparing cases and evidence for their debates. Our parliamentary debate case book contains over 800 original outlines of affirmative cases covering over 500 critical domestic and international topics, each satisfying our expectations for critical and rigorous analysis and structure. Our policy debate files include thousands and thousands of pages of materials. There was not a single debate this year that our policy debaters did not have multiple arguments which they could present against their opponents. In the vast majority of cases, those arguments included materials that specifically addressed our opponents' arguments even though we did not necessarily know their arguments ahead of time. That is impressive given the literally hundreds of arguments that other teams present.

In preparing these arguments, our students make excellent use of our facilities which include three computer labs and two storage areas. We are working to replace eight older computers that run too slowly but we have 9 brand new desktop computers, two new high speed printers, and 5 portables that are at most two years old. Whitman's library and online resources provide excellent research opportunities.

Students are carefully observed in practice drills and debates. In these one-on-one sessions, students are given extensive feedback. They redo their speeches. They rewrite arguments that need fixing. Students have easy access to Jim Hanson and our two assistant coaches for help in improving. Hanson works well with students and works tirelessly to help students improve. The assistant coaches are also excellent. This coming year, the assistants include an NDT semi-finalist and a 17th in the nation NPDA debater. They work closely with the students to improve their skills.

Their efforts pay off with some pretty impressive results. As an example, Sally Sorte and Annie Hickman began this year as novices going 3-3 at the Reed tournament. With coaching, practice, and effort, they were regularly going 5-1 and 6-0 near the end of the year. Eric Suni began his career at Whitman typically going 3-3 and 4-4 at national tournaments. His senior year, he was ranked as the sixth team in the nation. Matt Schissler began his debating at Whitman with 1-5 and 2-4 records. His junior year, he advanced to the quarterfinals of CEDA Nationals and the octafinals of the NDT, the policy national championship tournaments. The program has a strong history of helping students such as these maximize their talents.

Student reviews of the program have been excellent. In response to the statement, "RFS 221/222 provides an experience where I learned and improved as a speaker/debater/performer," 20 students said "strongly agree" and 6 said "agree." No students said neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree.

Further demonstrating the educational benefits and satisfaction with the program, student retention is very

high for a speech and debate program. While many programs are suffering from severe attrition, especially in policy debate, our program loses only a few fully active team members each year (usually due to a desire to pursue other interests; we've lost a total of only 3 policy students in the past two years). In fact, the retention rates have led the team to grow substantially in size over the past ten years. We are now one of the largest policy debate squads in the country (particularly among squads with mainly senior division competitors). Our parliamentary debate team is also large. As a whole, few debate squads have as many students participating as the Whitman program does.

Our alumni also provide support for the merit of our program. Many are successful professionals working as lawyers, hospital managers, advertising executives, software engineer managers, high school teachers, successful graduate students—particularly in rhetoric and communication—and in many other professions as well. These alumni repeatedly tell me that their participation in our debate program made a major difference in the skills that have made them successful. They laud the good communication, research, and organizational skills they learned. They also emphasize that being a member of the speech and debate team gave them excellent skills for working in groups.

We continue to seek to improve. We are reworking our parliamentary debate case book so that we have more cases and so that the cases are of higher quality and easier to use during preparation time. Our policy debaters are working to update, improve, and broaden our general evidence materials especially for the Courts topic that they are debating this year. We are reworking our beginning of the year preparation session to provide more time for our policy debaters to research and for our staff, especially Hanson, to have more one-on-one time to work with returning debaters in drills and case construction. We are working to create more collaborative research work among senior and younger team members.

Accreditation Self-Study
Department of Theatre

Program Objectives

The Theatre Department strives to provide majors and non-majors alike with a fundamental understanding of theatre as a form of artistic expression that demands intelligence, imagination, intuition, collaboration, rigorous aesthetic standards, and a broad base of knowledge. To accomplish this, we offer courses that explore the literary, cultural, historical, technical, and visual significance of theatre; we provide students with extensive production and performance opportunities; and we provide students with an “Artist in Residence” program.

The pedagogical objectives of our curricular and production programs are intertwined. Curricular experiences are reinforced and tested in dramatic productions, and guest artist presentations augment and reinforce the students’ experience in both the classroom and in public performances.

Curricular offerings are subject to an ongoing evaluation process by the Department and the College. We rely on the expertise of qualified teachers to assess the competence of the work students produce; our students have the opportunity to regularly demonstrate their competencies in public performance; and theatre majors are required to successfully complete a senior project prior to graduation.

Theatre Curriculum

Courses and dramatic productions are offered to provide the student with rigorous, demanding professional training and a cultural background with which to attain the highest standards in theatre. The Department of Theatre offers 36 courses over a two-year period. This curriculum represents three areas of study: performance, design and technology, and dramatic literature and theatre history. Included in this 36-course curriculum are 2 courses designed for flexibility and special needs: *Independent Study* and *Special Topics*. The *Independent Study* option is available each semester for students wishing to work one-on-one with a faculty member on a topic mutually acceptable to both parties; the *Special Topics* option is exercised in the event that staffing is available and sufficient student interest exists for a course not normally taught.

The theatre major requires a minimum of 35 credits. These credits represent 13 required courses in the three primary areas of study: *Beginning Acting I*, two semesters of *Play Production* and the associated labs, one design course, four semesters of courses chosen from the five theatre history and dramatic literature course options, two semesters of *Rehearsal and Performance*, and a senior project. This senior project serves as the required comprehensive examination in the major and is a graduation requirement.

The theatre minor requires a minimum of 20 credits. These credits represent six required courses: *Beginning Acting I*, one *Play Production* class, three semesters of the five theatre history and dramatic literature sequence of courses, and one credit in *Rehearsal and Performance*.

Although it is possible to complete a major or a minor in Theatre with the aforementioned curricular choices, the typical theatre student will take additional courses to allow concentration. To this end, the Theatre Department offers advanced as well as specialized courses for those students who require additional training in one or more of the three primary areas of study.

Performance Curriculum: Theatre majors are required to successfully complete *Beginning Acting I*. This course is also the initial prerequisite for all successive acting courses. Although this beginning acting course is extremely popular with majors and non-majors alike, theatre students with a need for professional training require more advanced and diverse course work in performance. To satisfy this need, the theatre curriculum offers students further study in acting, voice and movement, and directing: six successive acting courses (*Beginning Acting I and II*, 2 semesters of *Intermediate Acting*, and 2 semesters of *Advanced Acting*), two directing courses (*Director in the Theatre I and II*), and 2 specialized performance courses (*Voice and Movement for the Theatre* and *Performance Ensemble*). With two exceptions, each of the courses listed in the

performance curriculum is a one-semester class and is offered once every year. The exceptions result from enrollment demands for the *Beginning Acting* classes; *Beginning Acting I* is offered both semesters: three sections in the first semester and one section in the second. Two sections of *Beginning Acting II* are offered during the second semester.

Design and Technology Curriculum: Theatre majors are required to successfully complete two semesters of *Play Production* and *Play Production Lab*. These courses introduce students to the technology of theatre and to the collaborative process inherent in the production of theatre. The *Play Production Labs* require students to complete practical assignments in the areas of scenery construction, painting, stage lighting, and costume construction. The major must also complete one design course from the following options: *Lighting Design for the Theatre*, *Scenic Design for the Theatre*, and *Costume Design*. For those students with a need for specialized and advanced training in theatre technology, the theatre curriculum offers *Graphics for the Theatre, Drafting and Model Making* and *Graphics for the Theatre, Drawing and Painting* (offered in alternate years), *Computer Graphics for the Theatre*, and *Costume Construction*. With the exception of the *Graphics for the Theatre* sequence, all design and technology courses are one-semester classes and are offered each year.

Theatre History and Dramatic Literature Curriculum:

Theatre majors are required to successfully complete four of the five semester offerings in theatre history and dramatic literature. The minor requires three semesters. The three theatre history courses, (*Ancient Theatre*, *Theatre History from the Middle Ages to 1800*, and *Theatre History from 1800 to the Present*), are taught in alternate years with the dramatic literature sequence of courses, (*Dramatic Literature: Medieval through Eighteenth Century* and *Literature of the Modern Theatre*). In addition to these five courses, the department also offers *Seminar in Contemporary Theatre*, a survey course of recent plays from around the world. This is a one-semester course and is offered once each year.

Department of Theatre, Faculty and Staff:

1. Three full-time faculty: two tenured and one tenure-track.
2. Three staff members: an administrative assistant, a technical director, and a costume shop manager/costume designer. Both the technical director and the costume designer teach one course per semester and both have terminal degrees.
3. One adjunct instructor with a 2/3 teaching load in performance.
4. One adjunct instructor with a 1/3 teaching load in design and technology.
5. The Department is grateful to the English and Classics Departments for contributing to the Theatre curriculum. *Ancient Theatre* is offered by the Classics Department and *Dramatic Literature* is team-taught by members of the Theatre and English Departments. This interdisciplinary assistance provides for more varied course offerings and greater depth in presenting materials.
6. Visiting Educators in Theatre Program: The Theatre Department regularly employs guest artists to serve residencies at Whitman. From the fall of 2000 to the present, the John Freimann Visiting Artist In Drama and the Harper Joy Endowment funded sixty-six professional theatre practitioners in the areas of directing, design, stage management, choreography, acting, dialect coaching, music composition and performance, theatre technology, and playwriting. Past residencies were up to six weeks in length and guest artists presented workshops, participated in department theatre productions, taught *Special Topics* courses, mentored students, and continue to serve as a valuable networking resource for students exploring internships, graduate schools, or professional employment.

Enrollments / Student Participation in Department Programs

Historically, introductory and required classes have high enrollments and advanced classes have fewer

students. Necessary limits are placed on performance-based classes and on classes that use lab equipment. The advanced or specialized courses, regardless of enrollment numbers, are necessary in a theatre program. Without these courses, majors would be unable to concentrate their studies. The dramatic literature sequence of classes and the theatre history sequence are taught in alternate years and this often results in class over-enrollments. Students who wish to study abroad may have trouble completing these required classes. Due to staffing limitations, this unfortunate circumstance has not changed since the last accreditation. *Beginning Acting* continues to be a popular introductory class. Four sections are offered each year (a fifth section was offered in the 05/06 year) and all sections are traditionally filled. *Play Production* also attracts large numbers of students and the two classes offered each year are traditionally filled.

The Whitman *Institutional Research Report from Fall 2004 to Spring 2006* lists fifty-seven Theatre courses. Approximately 70% of those courses have an enrollment of 5 to 19 students; 24% have a smaller enrollment and 5% have 20 or more students.

Historic enrollment numbers in courses only partially describes student and community involvement in the Theatre program at Whitman. Our teaching historically extends well beyond the classroom to producing, performing, and attending plays.

Production is a vital pedagogical component of our teaching program. Seven full-length productions and three original one-act plays constitute a typical yearly production schedule. Each of these productions is a five-week laboratory where student actors, designers, stage managers, and technicians undergo practical training and are allowed to test their production proficiencies in performance. These production assignments are open to majors and non-majors alike and participation is directed and/or supervised by department faculty and staff. Performances serve the Whitman community as well as the Walla Walla community. Since 2004 attendance at season performances have averaged 89 percent of capacity in our two theatres.

Historic data on student involvement in theatre classes and in department productions:

In addition to the approximately 400 students who enrolled in Theatre classes in 2005/06, 258 students also participated in department productions. The 10 season productions staged during the past academic year involved 120 actors, 12 musicians, 4 directors, 3 playwrights, 21 stage managers, 36 designers, 1 composer, and 61 technicians. It should be noted that students also participate in performances as audience members: in 2005/06, 6421 patrons attended season productions.

05/06	404 enrolled in classes	258 in production	6421 total attendance
04/05	365 enrolled in classes	267 in production	7167 total attendance
03/04	384 enrolled in classes	226 in production	6886 total attendance
02/03	459 enrolled in classes	288 in production	6653 total attendance
01/02	522 enrolled in classes	243 in production	7075 total attendance

Theatre Majors: The *Graduates by Major Report* prepared by the Whitman's Office of Institutional Research lists 53 departments with statistics on graduated majors over a ten-year period beginning with 1996. The Theatre Department was ranked 8th in graduating majors 2005/06 and has never ranked below 15 out of the 53 departments assessed. During the ten year assessment period, the lowest ranking was 15th in 1996 and the highest was 6th in 1998. The ten-year average is 11 out of 53.

The Office of Institutional Research also cites a five-year average of 4.5 graduates per tenure-track faculty in Theatre. This five-year average compares favorably with the campus wide department average of 3.4 graduates per tenure-track faculty. The report also cites a low number of 2.67 graduates in 1996 as compared to 5.67 in 2005.

Major Changes since the 1997 accreditation

1. Staffing changes: Theatre was affected by two tenure-track retirements during the past ten years. The first in 1998 was a Professor of English with strong ties to the theatre program and the second in 2005 was an Associate Professor of Theatre who taught acting, movement and voice. Both vacancies were filled by tenure-track hires and although Theatre course offerings remain unaffected, the Theatre Program recognizes the loss of an interdisciplinary colleague who regularly directed two productions each year and served as the editor of our production publications.

In addition to the tenure-track staffing changes, the Theatre costume designer/shop manager position, part-time in 1997, was upgraded to a full-time staff position.

2. Guest Artists Funding: the John Freimann and Harper Joy Endowments have grown and the increased funding has enabled Theatre to increase the number of departmental guest artist residencies. The 1997 accreditation report listed an average of two guests a year. That number has increased to an average of eleven per year.

3. Changes to Major and Minor graduation requirements: in 2004 the requirements for Theatre Major and Minor were adjusted to require basic competencies in the three primary areas of theatre: acting/directing, design/technology, and theatre history/dramatic literature.

4. Changes to Senior Project requirements: In 2002 the requirements for the Senior Project in Theatre were adjusted to include three project advisors and an oral defense of the finished project. A course designation was assigned to the project and included in the College catalog.

5. Improved technology resources: a computer lab was incorporated in the Theatre building with appropriate hardware and software for six computer stations; a classroom was remodeled and includes “smart classroom” facilities; the theatre building has wireless internet technology; updated lighting and sound equipment replaced older problematic equipment in the two theatre performance spaces, and theatre technology construction spaces are well maintained (with few exceptions, all power equipment used in the costume and scenery shops has been replaced since 1997).

6. Building renovations since 1997 include: one remodeled classroom, replacement of lighting and sound equipment in two theatres, replacement of seating in the smaller of two theatres, a new stage floor in main theatre, the remodeling of dressing rooms and student bathrooms, and adequate life-cycle attention to cosmetic as well as physical equipment issues in the theatre building (paint, carpets, lobby furniture, heating and cooling, etc.)

Future Plans

The theatre program at Whitman has a consistently strong history of excellence, service, and productivity. Support from the Whitman community has enabled the program to prosper; our students have benefited from the talents of an exceptional staff and faculty, and financial support from the college and endowments has assisted the theatre program in earning national recognition. Any future plans must include the need to build on these strengths.

A number of the concerns cited in the 1997 accreditation report have been addressed successfully: we now have a full time costume designer as well as courses in costume design and construction, we have continued to incorporate computer technology in our teaching program, and our guest artist program has expanded. Our need for additional staffing is still a concern, however. The temporary adjunct position (two-thirds instructor in *Beginning Acting*) needs to be upgraded to a tenure-track position. This need was cited in the 1997 accreditation report and should be considered a priority. The Department is also concerned with inadequate technical support for our productions. As cited in a 2004 academic planning exercise, the department identified a need for additional technical support staff in the areas of scenery and costume construction. Future hires in Theatre

will necessitate the re-evaluation of current teaching assignments, and the existing curriculum may need adjustment in order to better staff the resulting program. Examples of curricular changes include expanded offerings of *Theatre History* and *Dramatic Literature* courses, and a course in Playwriting.

The department is also concerned with the existing Harper Joy building facilities. The theatre building has insufficient offices for our faculty and staff and contains only two classrooms. Although much has been done to improve the two theatre spaces, additional renovations are needed to update the facility's appearance, function, and safety.

Assessment of academic program and effectiveness

The assessment and adjustment of Theatre's academic program is governed by policies established by the College: Theatre faculty and staff identify, discuss, and suggest changes at regular department meetings, and decisions requiring the approval of the College at large are presented, debated, and voted on through established College channels. The counsel of colleagues at all levels of the process has traditionally been beneficial to curricular adjustments.

As stated earlier, the pedagogical objectives of our curricular and production programs are intertwined: the Theatre curriculum provides individualized training and the Theatre production program provides a means for students to demonstrate learned skills in a public venue.

Classes are open to majors and non-majors alike; in most cases enrollment is traditionally small and allows for highly individualized instruction. Qualified faculty assess student needs, present appropriate instruction, and evaluate student presentations. Students assess the value of the instruction by completing course evaluations at the end of each semester and these evaluations are used by the faculty to make pedagogical adjustments and by the College Personnel Committee for periodic faculty reviews.

Theatre production provides an opportunity for students to apply skills learned in class and demonstrate competencies in performance. Although auditions are open to all students, the audition process evaluates students who wish to perform. Students are cast in roles based on the director's assessment of the audition. Students also apply for technical and design positions. Design and technology faculty make production assignments appropriate to the skill level as well as the training needs of the student. The five-week production process for actors is a cyclical repetition of rehearsals, evaluations, feedback, and rehearsals. The five week production process for design and technology students involves a combination of design proposals, production meetings, fabrication sessions, technical rehearsals and performances. Throughout the production process, student involvement is continually supervised and assessed by numerous members of the Theatre faculty and staff, and individualized instruction is provided as necessary.

Assessment of a theatre major's academic and production work culminates in a senior project which must be successfully completed prior to graduation. This senior project serves as the required comprehensive examination in the major study as specified in the Whitman College Catalog. The Department must approve a student's topic based on an evaluation of prior academic and production work. A project advisor is selected to oversee the student's work, and a committee of three faculty members is selected to evaluate the finished product. The student is required to present an oral defense of the project to this committee prior to a vote designating success or failure.

Division III

Basic Sciences and Mathematics

Astronomy

Biochemistry, Biophysics and Molecular Biology (BBMB)

Biology

Chemistry

Environmental Studies

Geology

Mathematics

Physics

Accreditation Self-Study
Department of Astronomy

1. Goals of the Department

Astronomy serves two relatively distinct populations of students: 1), non-science-majors with varying levels of initial interest in astronomy, often fulfilling distribution requirements; and 2), students with a strong interest in science, including those who will go on to further study in Astronomy/astrophysics or astronomy education.

A goal for both groups is to use astronomy to increase the student's "scientific literacy"—after taking classes in Astronomy, students should better understand how scientists ask questions, take data, develop and evaluate models to explain the data, and present those models for scrutiny by others.

In addition, we aim to provide those students who are likely to continue with graduate study a solid, mathematically rigorous foundation on which to build. In particular, students going on to graduate study in astronomy should find themselves well prepared in terms of their fundamental knowledge of astronomy compared to their graduate school classmates.

2. Description of Astronomy

• Curriculum:

For the non-major, we offer Astr 100 (Fundamentals of Astronomy; 4 credits, includes a lab component), Astr 110 (Principles of Astronomy; 4 credits, includes a lab component) and Astr 120 (Current Problems in Astronomy; 2 credits). Astr 100 and 110 are two versions of the same course. Astr 100 is a 50-minute lecture three times per week with an 80-minute lab once per week. Astr 110 is taught in a lecture tutorial style where lab material is incorporated into the three 80-minute class periods each week. In both classes students' grades are based on a final and three midterm examinations. The exams include multiple-choice, fill in the blank, short explanation, and problem-solving questions. Astr 120 is intended to be a seminar-style course. Students are graded on class participation, an oral final exam, a paper on a topic that each student chooses, and a class presentation on that topic.

For science students, we offer a three-semester introductory sequence – Astr 177 (Sky & Planets), Astr 178 (Sun & Stars), and Astr 179 (Galaxies & Cosmology) – all of which are four credits, include a laboratory component, and presume knowledge of high school physics and mathematics. Grading in these courses is based on homework, exams, a paper, and lab projects. One of these courses is offered each semester; they may be taken in any order.

At the upper-division level, we offer four courses – Astr 310 (Astrophysics), Astr 320 (Galactic Astronomy), Astr 330 (Cosmology), and Astr 380 (Special Topics) – all of which presume knowledge of introductory college-level astronomy, physics and calculus. Grading in these courses is based on homework, exams, papers, and class presentations. The final examinations usually include an oral component. One of these courses is offered almost every semester. Students may also do independent study projects, senior research, and, if they are qualified, honors theses.

Students wishing to major in astronomy choose among four options: Astronomy, combined majors in Physics-Astronomy or Astronomy-Geology, or Individually Planned Majors (such as Astronomy-Math, Astronomy-Chemistry, Astronomy-Biology). Students also often major in, e.g., Physics or Mathematics, and minor in Astronomy.

• Equipment:

Astronomy has a planetarium with a Spitz 512 projector and a roof-top observation platform with fourteen telescopes ranging from a beautiful antique 4-inch Alvan Clark refractor to a 14-inch Celestron Schmidt-Cassegrain equipped with a CCD camera, as well as a 16-inch Newtonian at a dark site nine miles north of town. We have three dedicated rooms: one "smart room" for teaching and labs, a computer room, and a

third room, equipped with a high-end Mac, a high-end PC and 2 UNIX workstations with IDL software for student research. Both Departmental funds and external research grants contributed to the purchase of the student-research computers and software.

- Faculty:
Astronomy has 1.67 FTE tenure lines. Dr. Andrea K. Dobson, Associate Professor of Astronomy & General Studies, has been at Whitman since 1989 and, in addition to astronomy, teaches in the first-year general studies Core course. Dr. U.J. Sofia, Associate Professor of Astronomy, has taught here since 1998. Both are tenured, both have received the Lange Award for excellence in teaching in the basic sciences, and both are Garrett Fellows, a distinction bestowed College-wide in recognition of excellent teaching. Prof. Sofia has a strong publication record and regularly receives external grant support from NASA and the Hubble Space Telescope Science Institute for his research. Prof. Dobson is currently Chair of the Division of Basic Sciences and Mathematics and Secretary-Treasurer of Whitman's chapter of Phi Beta Kappa; her outreach includes several dozen planetarium shows each year for local school and community groups.
- Enrollments:
Enrollments in astronomy are consistently among the highest on campus, and Astronomy regularly has the highest credit load per FTE on campus. Averaged over the past 2 years, Astronomy has 96 credits per FTE per semester, 16% higher than the second most-loaded department, Sports Studies. On average over the past twelve years: about 125 students take non-majors' astronomy courses each year; 40 take the 170s courses each year (although this number has risen and the average over the last five years is 46); 15 take the 300-level courses, and 10 do independent study, research, or thesis. The demand for introductory Astronomy classes is high, and these courses are over enrolled on a regular basis.
- Changes since 1997:
Faculty:
In 1998 Dr. Katherine Bracher retired after 31 years at Whitman. Because there are only two of us, the only constraint in searching for her successor was only that it not be someone who specializes in lower main sequence stars. U.J. Sofia, who studies the composition of the interstellar medium, has been an excellent addition to the department.

Astronomy has revised the curriculum for both the majors' and non-majors' courses:

- At the upper-division level, we have added Astr 330, Cosmology, first offered in 2000, into our regular rotation of courses. The current generation of large telescopes is making possible stunning and important new developments in the study of the universe itself, from evidence about the origin of structure and the evolution of galaxies to the debate about the rate at which the universe is expanding. Student interest in the subject is also strong: we have offered the course four times, with an average enrollment of eleven students.
- In 2001 we created the Astr 177-178-179 sequence from the previous two-semester sequence. Modern telescopes and spacecraft have provided a wealth of new astronomical knowledge. Hubble Space Telescope observations, for example, make it possible to study some objects, such as star-forming regions or extremely distant / young galaxies, about which very little was known thirty years ago. In order to cover some areas well, we found that, in the two-semester sequence, we were having to drop important topics such as the Sun, the Interstellar Medium, and current debates about the rate of expansion of the Universe. Spreading our introductory sequence over three semesters gives our students a better introduction to the fundamentals of astronomy. This is borne out by our observations of students' preparation in the upper-division courses.
- In 2002 we revived and modified a course that was in the catalog, but rarely taught, Astr 120. Dr. Sofia modified the course to be a seminar that is a combination of a cosmology and current topics in other fields of Astronomy. The course is quite popular. The availability of a second non-major's course allowed the Department to discontinue offering 200-level independent studies that were used to satisfy science distribution, but were getting too numerous for our small department to handle.

- In 2003 we added a major in Astronomy. Physics-Astronomy or Astronomy-Geology remain preferred programs for students who intend to pursue graduate study in astrophysics or planetary science. We often have students, however, who are interested in astronomy but for whom graduate study in astronomy is not likely and for whom upper-division courses in physics or geology are not in accord with aptitude and / or interest. Our goal is to serve students such as, for example, a 2002 graduate whose Individually Planned Major supplemented astronomy with coursework in geology, physics, chemistry, writing, and film-making, positioning her well for graduate work in science video production and her current employment with NASA.
- In the fall of 2005 Prof. Sofia offered concurrently Astr 100 – a traditional lecture and lab course – and Astr 110 – incorporating the lab exercises into lectures. Forty-six students were enrolled in each class; pre- and post-tests of each class, as well as student responses on standard course evaluation forms, led us to conclude that the students in the tutorial-style course learned more. Astr 110 will be offered over the next several semesters to determine whether this conclusion is warranted. This class would greatly benefit from an updated lecture hall that included clickers for each student, and computers for small-group lab simulations (about 15 computers to accommodate 45 students). This is currently the major limitation for this class being what it could be. The only negative that we found in going from the lecture-and-lab to lecture-tutorial style of teaching the non-majors class is that it takes away opportunities for our majors to serve as lab assistants, an experience that we believe is valuable for them. If the College were to allow students to serve as graders for large classes, this negative effect would be mitigated.
- Our pedagogy has advanced greatly over the past decade thanks in part to technology, and to the availability of more venues for learning new methods. Rooms in which we teach are now “smart”, and technology has come a long way in the past decade, giving us the capability, e.g., to access and project much more current images than we could do with slides only. Both of us regularly incorporate image projection in our classes, including non-static images for demonstrations. We have adopted many new teaching methods into our classes such as lecture-tutorials in Astr 110, explain-to-your-neighbor and diagramming in the 170 and 300-level courses. We have also incorporated research projects into several classes that involve the analysis of space-observatory data with computational methods.

Since 1997 Astronomy has upgraded two significant pieces of equipment, and has added substantial computing resources for majors:

- With generous support from local foundations we were able two years ago to replace our aging 1969 Spitz A-5 planetarium projector with a new Spitz 512 instrument. The sky simulation is much crisper and more natural looking and we have enhanced ability to demonstrate sky motions and coordinates.
- Donations also enabled us over the past two years to upgrade the mount and CCD camera on our 14-inch telescope.
- Through a combination of the departmental budget and external grants, we have acquired several computers and workstations for use by students in classes and for research projects.

Research:

Research now plays a more important role in the Department than a decade ago. This increase corresponds to the increased expectations from graduate schools that students have some research experience as undergraduates. We have included research into our majors' curriculum in several ways. In several Special Topics courses, we have included projects that require students to learn the IDL computer language (an array-based language that is popular for data analysis in Astronomy) and manipulate data from the Hubble Space Telescope. We have also increased the number of summer research opportunities for our majors interested in continuing on to graduate school. An average of one student per summer works with Dr. Sofia on his research; all of these students' salaries have been paid through Dr. Sofia's research grants from NASA or the Hubble Space Telescope Science Institute.

3. Assessment of the academic program and its effectiveness

- Assessment in the major:
The Senior Assessment in Major (SAM) for students majoring in astronomy includes both written and

oral exams, typically taken early in the student's final semester. The written exam is produced by us and includes questions from each of the courses the students will have taken. Students have an entire day to work on the exam; full majors typically spend anywhere from five to eight hours answering ten multi-part questions; combined majors answer half as many questions. The oral component is an approximately one-hour exam conducted either by both of us, for straight astronomy majors, or conducted jointly by one or both of us and one or two members of the other department for combined majors. We have heard from students who have gone on to graduate school that the SAM was a capstone experience that put their four years of the major into context. In other words, the exam is not just an assessment tool for us, it's an important component of our majors' educations.

Over the past ten years there have been 42 astronomy seniors; of those, six have failed their exams initially and been asked to re-take some part of their SAM; none has failed a second time. We recently evaluated our SAM and determined that we should raise its difficulty level in response to the increasing abilities of the student body. The more difficult exam was implemented in spring of 2006; two of the three students who took the written exam failed in their first attempt. This was a reasonable outcome given the performance of these students in the classes for the major. The SAM allows us to see any broad gaps in the students' preparation, which allows us to modify our courses appropriately.

At least 13 of 41 students (one is deceased) have gone on to graduate work in astronomy, geology, astronautical engineering, mathematics, or education. Of those we can track, one completed a Ph.D. in astronomy in 2005 and is now a National Research Council postdoc, five have completed terminal master's degrees, and five are still in graduate school. Several have reported being well prepared for graduate work. We observe that students work well together in upper-division courses; in other words, we are succeeding in providing courses that are rigorous enough to prepare students well for graduate work without making astronomy as a major inaccessible to those who are not bound for graduate school.

- Assessment in astronomy courses:
All of our courses involve multiple types of assessment. Assessment in all courses includes examinations requiring written answers, mathematical manipulations, and logical thinking. Students in all except the largest classes are required to write short papers. Students in several classes are required to give oral presentations and/or take oral exams. Final exams are comprehensive.

Over the five years offerings of the Astr 177-178-179 sequence, 84% of the students have received grades of A or B, 14% grades of C or D, and 2% have failed. In upper-division courses, approximately 73% receive grades of A or B, 25% grades of C or D, and 2% fail. Our sense is that the percentage of A and B grades in the 100-level courses has increased over time and that it has done so for a combination of reasons, including both the College-wide (nation-wide!) trend toward grade inflation and the increased math and science preparation of incoming Whitman students. Even so, the grades in our 100-level non-majors classes are substantially lower than the average at the College. We have made some corrections upward in our expectations for all classes over the years and the students have responded well to the demands.

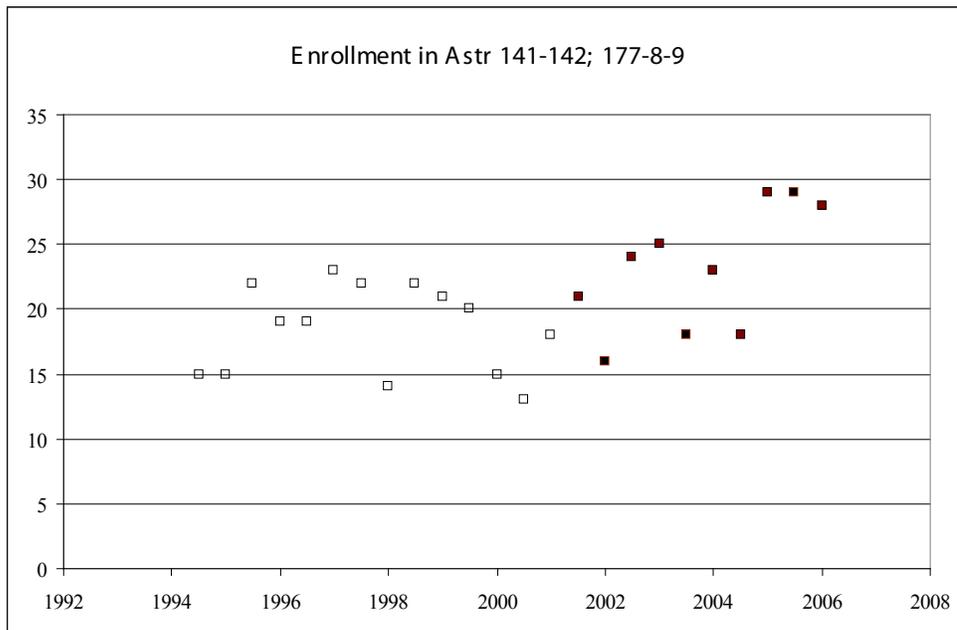
We do extra assessments of our Astr 100 or Astr 110 students because 1) they are a large majority of the students that we teach and 2) they are non-majors so we will not be able to assess them later in a SAM. Specifically, we give a pre- and post-course external examination that was created by the Conceptual Astronomy and Physics Education Research (CAPER) Team based at the University of Arizona. We have been giving this exam to students for the past 2 years (over 200 students), and the results show that the class is indeed effective with an average grade of 44% for the pre-course exam and 79% for the post-course exam. We have used the results from the exam to determine which concepts are difficult for the students to learn, and have modified our courses appropriately. We also used this exam to determine whether the lecture tutorial style of teaching the material (Astr 110) was more effective than the lecture plus lab (Astr 100). We found that the exam results did not show a significant difference between the classes. However, the Astr 110 class was able to cover more material than the Astr 100 class, particularly more

of the math-based Astronomy, which the CAPER exam does not test for. We believe, therefore, that the two course styles were equivalent for conceptual understanding, but that the Astr 110 group had a better understanding of the mathematics. This was finding was reinforced with identical math-based questions that were given on both the Astr 100 and Astr 110 final exams.

- Curriculum:
As noted above, students who go on to graduate study in astronomy are well prepared. Students who go on to study in planetary science are less well grounded because we do not, currently, have the resources to offer an upper-division planetary astronomy course.

Many Astronomy majors would benefit also from having an advanced lab course covering modern observing and data reduction techniques. At the moment this is rather haphazard, principally meaning that there are some students who choose (or whom we urge to choose) independent study projects in IDL programming or CCD theory and use. On the other hand, most well-qualified astronomy students succeed in getting one or more external summer internships where they have the opportunity to participate in a research project; also, usually, one student each summer works with Prof. Sofia on an interstellar medium project. As an example, during summer 2006 four students have external internships, two are working with Prof. Sofia, and two are working here in the Physics department.

Enrollment in the 177-178-179 sequence has increased in recent years. Partly this is due to a change in the College-wide distribution requirements several years ago; previously, students had been able to graduate from Whitman without taking any science courses. This change has meant an increase across the disciplines in enrollments in introductory science courses. In Astronomy, it has meant an increase from 15-20 students per class to 25-30 per class. As a result, in those courses there are now too many students to require oral presentations on term papers. We are pleased to have more students taking astronomy but frustrated that one result is diminished opportunity for students to practice their oral presentation skills. On the other hand, these courses now involve substantially more peer interaction than they did ten years ago, e.g., pauses for students to discuss a particular question and explain to each other, rather than simply lecture. The following graph shows this enrollment trend:



There is also enrollment pressure in the non-majors' courses. Depending on sabbaticals, we offer two or three sections of Astr 100/110 each year. As noted above, in-class assessment suggests that the tutorial-style course is more effective and we will continue to offer it and evaluate that conclusion. We try to keep class size at 40 but regularly are pushed to exceed that (sometimes to as many as 60 students in a class); Astr 100 and Astr 110 have been over enrolled every semester for the past three years, averaging 25% above the nominal limit (over enrolled by 10 students). For the past two years we have been able to keep electronic waiting lists during registration; what we see is that we could easily fill an additional 40-person section each year. We expect the demand for Astr 110 to increase because it has just been approved for counting toward the quantitative distribution requirement. Clearly many students who would prefer to take astronomy are not able to do so. Again, this is a question of resources. We have regularly capped Astr 120 at 25-30 students (this course is only open to those who have completed Astr 100/110), although here, too, more students would choose to complete their science distribution requirement with this course were we able to offer more than one section per year. On balance, we believe that we are providing as much access to astronomy courses as possible for our small department that does not get sabbatical replacements; the demand, however, definitely outpaces our ability to supply, even with consistently overloading our courses. Our biggest concern is that we are now regularly filling our 100-level courses before first-year students have a chance to register. That means that many students cannot try astronomy before their sophomore years which makes getting the required classes difficult if they do decide to be astronomy majors.

- On-going program assessment
We function well together as a department. That means, in part, that we both stay on top of developments across the broad range of astronomical sub-disciplines (including astronomy pedagogy) and that we regularly discuss pedagogical techniques, the topics that we are covering in our courses, topics we would like to be able to cover if we had the resources to offer additional courses, how our current students are doing, what we have heard from former students who have gone on to graduate work; in short, we are continually assessing our program and its effectiveness and responding as appropriate, sometimes in small ways, sometimes with significant curricular changes.

4. Summary and appraisal

The Astronomy Department serves a large number of non-science students, providing them with a broad overview of the discipline, as well as a smaller number of students with both the passion and the aptitude for more mathematically rigorous coursework. Student satisfaction with astronomy courses is high. About 1/3 of majors go on to graduate study, for which they typically report themselves to have been well prepared. The Astronomy faculty have distinct and complementary skills. As a two-person department with high student demand, Astronomy would benefit from the addition of third person; realistically, we realize that this is not likely to come about in the near term. We are engaged, daily (usually over coffee), in the process of appraising our program. We have made several curricular changes over the past ten years in response to pedagogical research, technological advances, and the wealth of new material available in astronomy today.

Current challenges for the department:

- Enrollment in non-major 100-level courses:
 - Extremely high loads for some faculty
 - We cannot assign homework that would count toward the grade in these classes because it would take too long to grade. The College has a policy that does not allow for anyone but the instructor to grade materials for a course. We find this to be an outdated concept that results in reduced learning opportunities for two distinct groups of students. The first group is composed of the students in the class who would benefit from the homework assignments. The second group is the upper-level students who would learn from grading the problem sets. Aspirant colleges such as Williams and Wesleyan have used student graders with success for many years.
 - Difficult to conduct seminar-type courses with high enrollments (Astr 120)

- Enrollment in 170-level courses:
 - These first courses for the major are often filling before first-year students register, which makes majoring in astronomy difficult.
 - Too many students no longer allows oral presentations in class
- Upper-division courses:
 - Cannot offer 300-level planetary science
 - Cannot consistently offer all students enough coursework involving modern observational and data analysis techniques
- Load calculations:
 - Some departments get credit toward their teaching loads from independent study / thesis / research classes. Astronomy does not, even though we have the highest load per FTE at the College. These one-on-one courses are a large burden and should be accounted for equitably across all departments.
- Facilities:
 - The Astr 110 course, which approximately 1/3 of all students at Whitman will take, sometime in their four years at the College, is limited by the classroom facilities. The course would benefit greatly from a classroom equipped with clickers and computers at the student desks. The classroom would allow for enhanced hands-on engagement of the students, which is a central theme for the lecture-tutorial concept. Classroom facilities such as that described are available at many public universities and community colleges; Whitman is lagging pedagogically in this area.
- Research:
 - The College provides no incentive to get students involved in research supported by external grants. In general the College is supportive of faculty research through a generous, flexible sabbatical program and a kickback to the PI's research budget from indirect costs charged to grants. We are concerned, however, that ASID budgets are not keeping up with the demands of the increasingly research-oriented faculty; this will limit some research activities if the trend continues.
- Service:
 - The Planetarium is a resource for the community but public presentations take time, either by Astronomy faculty, students, or both. While students can and do make some presentations, most students are not experienced enough to do most presentations; on the other hand, the College provides no incentive for faculty to participate in community service.

Astronomy within the context of the College as a whole Whitman's mission statement demands that departments participate in providing students with challenges and opportunities for "rigorous learning and scholarship", for developing their "capacities to analyze, interpret, criticize, communicate, and engage" and for fostering the growth of the "intellectual vitality" and "flexibility" that graduates will need to "succeed in a changing technological, multicultural world." The Astronomy Department responds to this mission in several ways.

The structure, content, and expectations we have of our classes demand that students engage with the material, with each other, and with us. Our class assignments and methods of student assessment require that students move beyond rote memorization to an understanding of the underlying principles and application of those principles to novel problems. Students are encouraged to work together, with respect for each other and each other's talents, to tackle questions raised in class. Students are expected to be able to read astronomical literature at the level appropriate for their background, write clearly, and, when class size permits, present material that they have learned orally to their peers. We bring to class items of current astronomical news and encourage students to do the same. In addition to having the library maintain subscriptions to several journals at various technical levels, we encourage students to visit, regularly, some of the numerous astronomical web sites which exist today. Solar eclipses are now webcast live, NASA sites post last week's Cassini images of Saturn or last month's Spitzer Space Telescope infrared pictures of the Andromeda galaxy, to give just a few examples. Current astronomical questions—for which we don't necessarily have the explanations—are always being placed before our students. Beyond searching the web, students are required to use computer software

for a variety of tasks, including office software such as spreadsheets and word processing, as well as software to perform astronomical simulations, data analysis or programming; again, all at a level appropriate for their background.

Students who do well in the more rigorous courses are encouraged to work as lab assistants—there is no better way to learn the material than by participating in teaching it—and to apply for external summer research internships (e.g., from the broad range of NSF-funded Research Experience for Undergraduates programs). Many senior research projects arise from students' summer internships. Their scholarship is in turn presented to others, e.g., at the annual Whitman Undergraduate Conference, and, for some, at national meetings.

We also encourage students to use the oldest observational tools of all—their eyes. Despite our local light pollution, Walla Walla skies are considerably darker than what students from more densely populated areas are accustomed to seeing. We ask our introductory students and all lab assistants to learn constellations—it's a way to get them to look up. And it is a way to get them to think about this planet in its context as small and fragile blue marble afloat in a vast universe.

Appendices are available in the Accreditation Exhibit Room, and include sample syllabi, exams, faculty vitae.

Accreditation Self-Study
Biochemistry, Biophysics and Molecular Biology (BBMB)

I. Program Goals

The maturation of molecular and structural biology over the past half-century, combined with the exploding information of genomics and proteomics from recent genome sequencing projects, has made the molecular life sciences a critical, integrative area of study at the undergraduate level. The goal of the program in Biochemistry, Biophysics, and Molecular Biology (BBMB) is to offer interdisciplinary courses and a major at this interface of the physical and biological sciences. The curriculum focuses on the understanding of biological processes at the molecular and cellular level and seeks to prepare students to enter the rapidly developing research fields of biotechnology, biomedicine, and structural biology.

II. Program Description

Whitman College has offered a rigorous course of study in the molecular life sciences since 1991 by offering a combined major in biology and chemistry, with emphasis on biochemistry and molecular biology. With the addition of a tenure line in biophysics in 2002, a new interdisciplinary program was crafted: Biochemistry, Biophysics, and Molecular Biology (BBMB). The BBMB major is anchored in the core disciplines of biology, chemistry, and physics, requiring at least 8 credits of introductory level courses from these departments, along with 9 credits in mathematics. The biology, chemistry, and physics departments commit a fractional FTE (0.33 from physics, 0.5 from biology, and 0.75 from chemistry) to the BBMB program. The junior and senior year includes the core courses of biochemistry, biophysics, and molecular biology, each with a laboratory component, along with electives in the area of interest for each student. The major concludes with a senior seminar that explores the newest developments in this rapidly changing field and provides a forum for students to present their senior research projects to faculty and students. From 1993-2002, an average of 10 students per year earned degrees with a biology-chemistry combined major, prior to the establishment of BBMB in 2003. From 2003-2006, an average of 16 students have graduated with a BBMB major and 20 students are scheduled to graduate in 2007.

III. Assessment of academic program

We use a variety of tools to assess the nature and effectiveness of our program, including external recommendations from professional organizations or commissioned reports (the ASBMB recommended curriculum and BIO2010 report), oral and written comprehensive exams, senior seminar and research projects, annual course reviews, and post-graduate career choices surveys.

a. ASBMB Recommended Curriculum: The Education and Professional Development Committee of the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (ASBMB) published its updated curriculum and implementation plan in 2003 (*Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Education*, 31:161-62, 2003). This recommended curriculum contains both core content areas and skills that students should obtain. Our required coursework satisfies all of the recommended core content areas in biology, chemistry, physics, and math, with the added element of including a specific course with lab in biophysics. In addition, our required curriculum includes a senior research experience with formal written report and oral presentation, as recommended by the ASBMB committee. Finally, our students are formally presented with opportunities in one or more classes to obtain most of the recommended skills. (See Appendices I and II for comparisons of the ASBMB recommended curriculum and skill areas with Whitman College's BBMB program)

b. BIO2010 Report: The BIO2010 report from the National Research Council on transforming undergraduate education for future biomedical researchers was published in 2003. Commissioned by the NIH and HHMI, this report also provides a benchmark for assessing the quality and strength of our program.

c. The GRE Subject Exam in Biochemistry, Cell, and Molecular Biology: We have used the subject exam in Biochemistry, Cell, and Molecular Biology since 1993 for our students in the chemistry-biology combined

major and now the BBMB major. We believe that this tool provides the best fit to our required curriculum for testing both content and data analysis skills. With the majority of our graduates pursuing some form of graduate or professional education, this GRE subject exam is the best available instrument for comparing our graduates (e.g. the Biochemistry exam from the American Chemical Society is much too narrow in scope and there is not an equivalent Major Field Test from the Educational Testing Service [ETS]). There are however, significant limitations to the exam.

d. The Oral Exam: The second component of the comprehensive exam in the major is an oral exam administered by a committee consisting of two faculty members. The oral exam focuses on integration of concepts, the ability to analyze data and design experiments, and fluency in the vocabulary of the molecular life sciences. The oral does not consist of a question set. The committee subjectively determines one of three outcomes: Pass with distinction, Pass or Fail.

e. The Senior Research Project: Each BBMB student formulates a senior research project at the end of the junior year. In the past three years 55% of the seniors have completed their experimental project off-campus during the summer at a biotech/pharmaceutical company, government research lab, or academic/private research facility. The other 45% collaborate with a Whitman faculty member (any faculty member in biology, chemistry, or physics) and work either during the summer or during the senior academic year. The senior research project allows an assessment of a student's:

- 1) understanding of how his or her specific experiments fit into the big picture of the goals of the lab
- 2) proficiency in experimental technique and design
- 3) facility with data analysis and interpretation.
- 4) ability to read the relevant literature for the project
- 5) ability to collect and write a coherent paper summarizing and analyzing the project.

f. The Senior Seminar: The Senior Seminar is a formal course that meets twice a week during the final semester of the senior year. The Senior Seminar has two goals: 1) a forum for each senior to present a seminar to his/her peers and faculty describing the senior research project; and 2) a journal-club forum for students to present and critique current research papers that describe cutting-edge discoveries in the molecular and cellular life sciences. The senior seminar offers a superb environment for students to critically assess the primary literature and become informed of the major developing areas in the molecular life sciences. It also provides ample opportunity for honing oral communication skills for students.

g. Post-graduate career choices:

Of the 46 graduates from 2003-2005, we have recent survey information from 36 students:

- 10 are enrolled in M.D., M.D./PhD., or D.O. programs in medical schools
- 10 are enrolled in Ph.D. graduate programs in the biomedical sciences
- 8 are employed as research technicians or fellows in academic medical centers, government labs (NIH & CDC), or in biotechnology/pharmaceutical companies.
- 2 are enrolled in M.P.H. programs in schools of public health
- 2 are employed in allied health fields
- 1 is enrolled in a D.P.T. program in physical therapy
- 1 is enrolled in a D.V.M. program in veterinary medicine
- 1 is enrolled in a M.S. program in science education
- 1 is serving in the Peace Corps

IV. Analysis/Projection

a. BIO2010 Report: Our BBMB program has effectively implemented five of the eight key recommendations. These include the focus on interdisciplinary teaching and coursework, incorporation of biological examples into introductory chemistry and physics courses, the opportunity for collaborative research projects for credit, and the presence of seminar courses to explore cutting-edge research developments. The very nature of our BBMB

program incorporates the primary recommendation that a strong foundation in quantitative skills, analytical techniques, and computer modeling and informatics is essential for preparing undergraduate students to participate as research scientists in the life sciences. One recommendation is not relevant to our program.

Two of the recommendations have not been adequately implemented. These recommendations recognize the need for faculty development and institutional support for the development of techniques, experiments, and course materials to support such the interdisciplinary teaching and cross-departmental collaboration and staffing. We don't believe the College has adequately supported the curriculum development structure (faculty time, financial support, recognition of faculty professional activity) needed to do this. Also, the current faculty appointment structure of the college (tenure track, appointments into departments only, and not the interdisciplinary areas) provides an obstacle to reaching these goals.

b. The GRE Subject Exam in Biochemistry, Cell, and Molecular Biology: Although approximately 2500 students take this subject exam each year, the ETS does not provide a statistical report that separates undergraduate students from graduate students using the exam for fellowship applications and/or qualifying exams. Thus, although it is not possible to make a direct comparison of our graduates solely with their undergraduate peers, the GRE subject exam provides a rigorous comparison to a group of students who are pursuing graduate education in the molecular and cellular life sciences. When the exam was introduced in the early 1990s, we set target percentile scores as part of our comprehensive major assessment, with 70th percentile and above being a score of distinction and 30th percentile a passing score. The passing score was revised to 20th percentile. For the 46 students graduating in 2003-2005, the mean percentile score was 54.5 (median 55) with 2 students scoring below the 20th percentile on a first attempt, and 11 students scoring above the 70th percentile.

c. The Senior Research Project: Both the ASBMB recommended curriculum and the BIO2010 report recommend the inclusion of an independent, experimentally based research project during the 4-yr major curriculum with the potential to receive academic credit for research conducted in collaboration with faculty on-campus or with off-campus investigators. We view the senior research component as a strength of the program. Although it does not appear to have full support within the college administration due to the staffing challenges it poses, we believe that the senior research component of our curriculum is essential for preparing students to be active research scientists, as noted by a series of recommendations from the National Academy of Sciences regarding undergraduate science education, especially the BIO2010 report.

d. The Senior Seminar: Our only challenge has been the success of the program. With increased enrollments, the seminar now enrolls ~18 students. Further increases in the size of the student body and the major would be detrimental to the format of the senior seminar, which emphasizes student presentations for evaluation of the literature and full length oral presentations on research projects.

e. Enrollment in the BBMB program and courses: Since the formation of the BBMB program 2003, graduates in the program have increased in number from an average of 10/yr (between 1993-2002 with the biology-chemistry combined major) to 18/yr. Enrollment in the biochemistry course has increased from a single section of 18 in 1993 to 52 students in 2005 (now taught in two sections). The molecular biology course has grown from 10 in 1993 to 22 in 2005, while the newly created biophysics course also enrolls >20 students. All three courses have expanded to 2 laboratory sections. Growth in student choice of BBMB as a major has exceeded our expectation and we would hope not to see any increase in student numbers without a concomitant increase in BBMB faculty staffing. Advising into the major has been sound with the minor exception of some students perceiving BBMB as a Pre-med major, possibly as a result of miscommunication from college admissions staff. Although the required courses for BBMB closely resemble the required courses for admission to allopathic, dental, and veterinary medicine schools (biology, chemistry, math, physics), BBMB is not intended to function primarily as a premed major.

f. Course prerequisites and sequencing for Biochemistry, Biophysics, and Molecular Biology courses: We

have experimented with three recommended course sequencing options and have concluded that the optimal sequence is to have students concurrently enroll in Biochemistry and Biophysics in the Spring semester of the junior year, followed by Molecular Biology in the Fall semester of the senior year. This course sequence allows students to complete prerequisite courses in organic chemistry, general physics, math, and genetics prior to the core BBMB courses while providing a firm foundation in biochemical and biophysical principles and techniques which enables students to pursue sophisticated summer research opportunities between the junior and senior year. In addition it provides some flexibility, whereby students who choose the major later have the option of taking the biophysics course in the spring semester of the senior year.

g. Quantitative literacy and application to biological systems: We concur with the recommendation in the BIO2010 report regarding the need to better integrate quantitative methods and modeling into the life sciences. As our number of BBMB majors has increased, we see more students in the biophysics and biochemistry courses demonstrating lower levels of mathematical preparedness and confidence, especially with regards to derivative and integral calculus and statistical analysis. This is also an issue in the general physics course, in regards to applications of vectors, trigonometry, and algebra. BBMB and physics faculty have discussed this issue. In the absence of a specialized course to teach quantitative methods for the life sciences, we will include a more substantial review of calculus and applications to physical systems at the beginning of the biophysics course.

Citations:

“Recommended Curriculum for a Program in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology”.

JG Voet, E Bell, R Boyer, J Boyle, M O’Leary and JK Zimmerman for the Education and Professional Development Committee of the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. *Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Education*, 31:161-62, 2003.

“Bio2010: Transforming Undergraduate Education for Future Research Biologists”.

Committee on Undergraduate Biology Education to Prepare Research Scientists for the 21st Century, Board on Life Sciences, the National Research Council of the National Academies, National Academies Press, 2003.

Appendices are available in the Accreditation Exhibit Room.

Accreditation Self-Study
Department of Biology

I. Departmental Goals

The goals of the Biology Department are: 1) to provide a comprehensive exposure to biology for biology majors, with the following components: a) a broad background in diverse biological sub-disciplines, b) an integrative perspective that draws connections between those sub-disciplines, c) a focused and rigorous research experience, and d) experience communicating science orally and in writing; 2) to contribute to interdisciplinary programs related to the life sciences, such as BBMB and Environmental Studies; 3) to provide courses for biology majors or non-biology-majors hoping to pursue medical, veterinary, dental or other pre-professional education; 4) to provide courses for non-majors for distribution requirements and as part of their broad liberal arts education.

These goals contribute to various aspects of the college's mission, providing rigorous education in biology as one component of a well-rounded liberal arts education, both for majors and non-majors. For majors, a required senior research/thesis experience in particular provides a capstone for the biology program, developing students' capacities to analyze, interpret, and criticize in the context of biological scholarship. In addition, the research thesis and seminar require students to engage and communicate data, ideas, and analysis.

II. Program Description

Curriculum: An explicit description of Biology the biology programs and curriculum, including majors' requirements and all course offerings, can be found in the college catalog. For majors, the curriculum requires both breadth and depth, and hands-on laboratory experience is emphasized throughout. A core set of classes required of all majors includes classes at the introductory, intermediate, and advanced levels. These include the cornerstone introductory Biological Principles and Biological World courses, intermediate courses in Genetics and Ecology, and advanced courses in Cell biology and Physiology. Laboratories are required for all of these core courses. Electives round out the major; diverse electives range from biochemistry and molecular biology through evolutionary biology.

Research represents the capstone experience for Biology and Biology-combined majors. In addition to required coursework, all Biology and Bio-combined majors must carry out research either at Whitman or at an off-campus lab, field station, or agency. All such projects must be supervised by faculty, medical or other professionals, or field biologists. In their senior year, with guidance from a Whitman faculty research advisor, all majors write up a thesis and present a formal research seminar to the department, describing background information, and their research data, analysis, and interpretation. Biology faculty each advise several senior research projects per year, and senior research/thesis/seminar supervision is included as a small portion (1/6) of annual faculty teaching loads. This research requirement has been in place since the early 1990's and is considered a key aspect and strength of the program. Nationally, the value of research experience in undergraduate education has gained increasing recognition in recent years*, and this is something for which the Whitman Biology department has been far out ahead of the national curve. [*e.g., see the BIO 2010 report from the National Research Council on transforming undergraduate education, published in 2003: "*Bio2010: Transforming Undergraduate Education for Future Research Biologists*". Committee on Undergraduate Biology Education to Prepare Research Scientists for the 21st Century, Board on Life Sciences, the National Research Council of the National Academies, National Academies Press, 2003].

A recent development in our curriculum is an emphasis on "integrative biology": promoting a perspective in which students consider biological processes from the biochemical/ molecular level through the cellular, organismal, evolutionary, and ecological levels. Such an integrative perspective is important in the "post-genomic" era, and we are emphasizing it in both introductory and advanced classes, including Biology 111, genetics, physiology, neurobiology, developmental biology, and molecular biology. In 2002, the Biology (and BBMB) programs received a \$340,000 grant from the W.M. Keck Foundation to purchase lab equipment and computers for this initiative. This grant allowed us to update genetics and molecular labs to include new

genomics and gene expression experiments, and to introduce digital cell imaging to laboratories for several introductory and advanced courses.

Biology also contributes to many interdisciplinary majors programs, including biology-environmental studies, BBMB, combined majors such as biology-geology, and Individually Planned Majors such as biology-psychology. Majors in these programs complete almost all of the course requirements of biology majors, plus additional courses in the other disciplines (specific requirements for various programs are listed in the course catalog). Thus, for practical purposes (e.g., counting the numbers of majors the program serves), combined majors should be counted as full biology majors- although they are not usually counted as such by the college's administration.

The Biology department also contributes much to non-majors' education, allowing students from all parts of campus to fulfill distribution requirements, meet science requirements for application to medical, vet, or dental programs, or fulfill explicit science requirements for their specific majors (e.g., Whitman psychology majors must take at least one course in biology). Biology offers far more non-majors' courses than any other science department; listings and descriptions of biology's many non-majors' courses can be found in the college course catalog.

Faculty: Whitman biology faculty contribute to the program's goals by representing diverse sub-disciplines in the life sciences, and by maintaining active research programs (some federally funded) to provide undergraduate research opportunities. Biology faculty are established scientists: all had post-doctoral experience and almost all maintain active research programs. The research interests of various biology faculty are described on the Whitman Biology web site [<http://www.whitman.edu/biology/>] and associated links.

Since the last accreditation, the department has made three tenure-track hires: one was an upgrade of a temporary position, one a replacement, and one an addition. In all 3 cases, the department made strategic hires in specific areas that would buttress formerly weak aspects of the program, cover essential sub-disciplines, and provide more breadth to the department. Around the time of the last accreditation (1997), a temporary position in molecular/ developmental genetics was converted to tenure track. The department added a tenure-track position in neurobiology (2001), and replaced one senior member who left for an administrative job at another institution (1999). For the latter, the outgoing professor, a geneticist, was replaced with a population geneticist/ evolutionary theorist. These changes have enhanced our non-majors' offerings, as well as our major program; for example, the population geneticist brought a new area of expertise to the department, and also teaches conservation biology for environmental-studies students.

In the sciences, the integration of teaching and research is essential, and active scholarship contributes to quality teaching. (How can one be qualified to teach science at the college level if one is not an actual scientist?) The breadth of expertise among biology faculty allows us to offer diverse electives as well as cover the range of core required courses (see above). Research interests in the department range from molecular biology and genomics through ecology and evolutionary genetics. Thus the department can support a diversity of student interests for research/thesis supervision. Biology faculty are leaders on campus for integration of teaching and research, most working every summer on collaborative research with students, and incorporating elements of research into their classes and teaching laboratories.

External funding and links with outside labs allow Biology faculty to provide top-notch on-campus research opportunities for biology majors. Some Biology faculty maintain recognized research programs with external support from private foundations or federal agencies: Ginger Withers' neurobiology lab is funded by a prestigious NSF CAREER award, and Dan Vernon's molecular biology research is funded by the NSF, and has received past support from the USDA, NSF, and Murdock Charitable Trust. Delbert Hutchison, Heidi Dobson, and Paul Yancey have received peer-reviewed funding from the Murdock Charitable Trust in recent years, and also collaborate with colleagues at research universities.

While Biology faculty provide breadth for the program in terms of expertise, it should be noted that Whitman has far fewer biology faculty than do most comparable institutions. Top-tier liberal arts institutions such as Pomona College and Williams College, for example, have *double* the number of biology faculty serving approximately the same number of students. This, in combination with our high enrollments in required courses (see below), prevents us from offering an optimal number of electives, and we lack electives in some major areas that are typically represented in college biology programs (*e.g.*, Plant Physiology, Invertebrate Biology).

Enrollments: Information on number of majors and course enrollments is available from the office of institutional research. Enrollments in the Life sciences continued to rise during the 1990's, and the life sciences, including Biology and the closely-related BBMB and Biology-ES programs, consistently serve the largest number of majors on campus, both in terms of absolute numbers and numbers of majors per faculty FTE. [Note for interpreting institutional data: in institutional records, Biology, BBMB are listed separately, and biology-combined majors are not counted as wholes students, despite the fact that they take essentially the same courses as biology majors]. Enrollments in individual classes at all levels, from introductory to advanced, are high. Introductory and intermediate courses such as Biology 111 and Genetics enroll between 35-48 students per semester (these courses are offered both semesters each year- otherwise they would have from 70-96 students per class). Even 300-level advanced courses such as physiology and cell biology have enrollments from 40-48 students. Enrollments for all of these classes are physically constrained by space in teaching laboratories. The department has reached a point where, if the college further enlarges its student population, biology majors may not all be able to graduate within 4 years, due to the lack of space in these advanced required classes. Advanced electives also often have high enrollments, some, such as neurobiology, marine biology, and microbiology, are typically filled to capacity.

Since the mid-90's, the department has dealt with increasing enrollments by adding additional sections of key classes and laboratories: making permanent a second section of genetics lecture, adding a second section of genetics lab, adding a second ecology course (plant ecology), and adding additional lab sections in both cell biology and physiology. One indirect impact of these efforts to keep enrollments down has been that they ultimately limit the number of electives the department can offer, because faculty resources are devoted to offering second sections in these required courses. Thus, because we have far fewer Biology faculty than similar institutions, we can not offer as many electives as most comparable institutions.

III. Assessment/Projection of the Biology program: faculty, academic program, and effectiveness

The department is continuously assessing the biology academic program, using both internal and external considerations. Recent faculty hires, for example, provided opportunities to assess departmental expertise and add or reconfigure positions to provide breadth to the department (see above). A Biology Department academic planning document, submitted to the college administration in September of 2004, detailed our program needs in this area and suggested plans for how future hires could further strengthen our academic program (That planning document will not be summarized here. It is available as an appendix in the Accreditation Exhibit Room).

Once faculty are on board, the college has systems and schedules in place for regular evaluation of both tenured and non-tenured faculty. Teaching is assessed by the college personnel committee using student and colleague evaluations. External measures provide evidence of faculty research productivity and (more important) research quality: peer-reviewed publication and peer-reviewed external funding. All but one biology faculty have published peer-reviewed papers since the last accreditation, most have published several. Publication impact factors available from the ISI Science Citation Index can serve as pseudo-quantitative measures that serve as outside confirmation of faculty research significance (at least for papers that have been out and published for several years). Several Biology faculty have strong records of high-impact publication by this measure.

Peer-reviewed grants provide the most-rigorous form of outside assessment of faculty research, and several

biology faculty have received peer-reviewed awards from foundations and major federal agencies since the last accreditation (see prior section). In fact, at the time of the last Whitman accreditation, only one faculty member in the entire college (a biologist) had federal research funding. So, the Biology program, and the college as a whole, have really improved in this regard since 1997. In terms of academic scholarship, the Biology department is very strong for a science department at an undergraduate liberal arts institution.

In terms of course requirements, classroom learning, and teaching effectiveness, the success of our academic program itself is assessed by internal departmental discussions and by student outcomes (discussed below). For the former, strategic faculty additions and the recent incorporation of genomics and imaging technology into the curriculum serve as examples of our continuous efforts to keep our program up to date. External validation of our departmental curricular improvements was provided by the peer-reviewed external grant from the W.M. Keck Foundation.

Various types of student outcomes are considered for self-assessment of our program. First, the increasing numbers of majors in the life-sciences provide an informal indication of program success and teaching effectiveness. Students declare majors after taking introductory and intermediate courses such as Bio 111, Bio 112, genetics, and ecology, so it appears that these courses are a positive factor in our program's popularity.

Senior year student comprehensive examinations provide one assessment of departmental success in teaching and learning. Biology and Bio-combined majors all take both written and oral comprehensive exams in their senior year. Oral exams are administered by a committee of faculty who may ask any questions on any aspect of biology. Emphasis is on questions that allow the student to demonstrate integration and conceptual understanding of material- but any type of question on biology is fair game. For written senior exams, students take the Biology GRE, and they must score at or above the 30th percentile nationally. We acknowledge that the GRE is imperfect in some respects, and we have periodically considered other possibilities. However, we have concluded that this exam serves as the best available exam for our purposes, because it is consistent in difficulty from year to year, it contains equal numbers of questions on distinct aspects of biology (cell biology, organismal biology, and ecology), and it allows standardized comparison of our student population to biology undergraduates nationwide (albeit a largely self-selected subset of national undergraduates). The department keeps records of seniors' GRE results, documenting student success and allowing us to compare student outcomes from year to year and assess how seniors as a group do on the three components of the exam (molecular biology, organismal biology, and ecology). Prior to the last accreditation, review of such information had helped the department set priorities for faculty hiring. Since then however, consistent student performance on these exams has served as external validation of success of the biology program in its current form.

Student achievement after graduation provides further outside validation of our academic program's success. Large percentages of biology majors are accepted into biology-related graduate and professional programs such as medical school. (For example, 63% of life science majors who graduated in 2004 have gone onto graduate school.) Others go on to employment in biology-related staff positions in government agencies, industry, or academic laboratories. Both the Biology department and the alumni office keep records of student achievements of this sort; Biology records of student achievement have been supplied to the accreditation committee as separate Excel files. While such alumni records may be imperfect (we cannot possibly get current information on every graduate once they leave the college), they firmly establish that outside agencies (universities, employers, etc) concur that our program provides students with a strong foundation for further pursuit of biology. For graduate school, most students are awarded teaching or research scholarships that include tuition waivers plus sizeable stipends. Acceptance in such programs serves as a strong indication that our rigorous coursework, research, and research/thesis requirements are viewed positively by other institutions.

Integration of teaching and research is of great importance to our academic program, and makes a major contribution to our program goals and their application to the college's mission (see section I). Several factors are used to assess this, and they clearly demonstrate our success in integrating teaching and research: 1)

students are included as co-authors on faculty publications and on faculty presentations at major national and international conferences; 2) many students themselves present at undergraduate research conferences such as the annual Murdock Undergraduate Conference; and 3) student theses and departmental seminar presentations provide internal documentation of student research success. Research also impacts teaching in the classroom: recent advances in areas such as genomics, cell imaging, and developmental biology have impacted many areas of biology, and faculty who are active scholars incorporate new material and methodologies into the classroom. The Keck grant mentioned above promoted integration of modern research methods and perspectives into a number of teaching laboratories and classes, and serves as outside validation of our program's efforts in this regard.

Assessment of our program is an ongoing process. Looking towards the future, the department submitted a detailed "academic planning document" to the college administration in September of 2004. This document represents a summary of a recent self-assessment of departmental challenges, and it outlines the department's aims for dealing with our large enrollments, diversifying our elective offerings, and adding additional faculty in integrative areas of biology, such as evolutionary-developmental biology or physiology. This document should be available from the office of the Dean of Faculty, and will be available in the Accreditation Exhibit Room.

Major strengths and challenges

Our strengths include breadth of expertise, quality of faculty and faculty research programs, integration of research and teaching, rigorous majors' requirements, an updated curriculum incorporating genomics and cell-imaging technologies, numerous contributions to non-majors' education, and our emphasis on real research experience for students.

One challenge is each faculty's need to find a balance between doing productive research to maximize publication output, *vs.* doing less-productive research with students. Historically, our department has emphasized the latter, while still succeeding in the former. But as institutional priorities shift towards higher publication requirements, faculty must reconsider their commitment to working with students (something that has long been a strength of our program). When it is time for faculty evaluation by administration or the personnel committee, there is a perception that the college places little value on involving students in real scholarship; rather the evaluation of research by the college tends to get reduced to a simple consideration of publication numbers. This is especially a concern for faculty in rigorous laboratory sciences that face a relatively high bar for publication, and who also must allocate much time and scholarship effort to seeking external funding.

Another challenge is our high enrollments for the number of Biology faculty. Enrollments will become more problematic if the college follows through with current plans for increasing the size of the student body. Because of this, biology has been lobbying the administration for an additional tenure-track position.

Another challenge is a perceived lack of backing from the college administration: the administration has historically given a clear impression that clearly it does not support or appreciate Biology's emphasis on student research (despite national trends in this direction), and there is at least a perception that the Whitman administration is not committed to the sciences in general.

Two other challenges to biology (and to the sciences in general) are changes in institutional priorities that have taken place at the college in the past year. First, there is a recent trend toward proliferation of interdisciplinary "studies" programs (e.g., in the past year cognitive studies, global studies, ethnic studies, even "Canadian Studies" programs have been proposed). There is a possibility that these sorts of programs will titrate resources from more substantial academic disciplines. This is exacerbated by another perceived administration priority shift: in the past year, social concerns, rather than the academic program, have become the top priority of the administration. This has caused a shift in hiring priorities, as new faculty positions are no longer allocated

solely by academic priorities. Hiring practices have also changed, with the administration altering search criteria and over-ruling decisions by faculty search committees, to advance non-academic agendas.

Appendices are available in the Accreditation Exhibit Room.

Accreditation Self-Study
Department of Chemistry

1. Goals/Objectives/Roles of the Chemistry Department

Chemistry's role in the overall educational program at the College. The role of the chemistry department is to offer courses that have the common objectives: to develop the successful applications, scientific models and logical thought processes; to illustrate the role of chemistry in the study of other sciences and in life; and to promote effective scientific inquiry. All of our courses meet these criteria. Specific to this objective, we offer three entry-level course tracks that meet these criteria: our chemistry for students not majoring in a natural science (Chem 100 and Chem 102), our traditional general chemistry sequence (Chem 125 and Chem 126), and our accelerated general chemistry (Chem 140).

Chemistry's role in servicing other natural science programs. One of the chemistry department's largest service components is to teach the traditional courses required for geology, biology, biochemistry, biophysics, and molecular biology majors, as well as several combined major programs. This commitment ranges from only one semester of chemistry for geology majors to a large range of courses for biology and biochemistry majors. These curricula prepare students for diverse careers in the sciences.

Chemistry's role in educating chemists. Chemistry serves the dual role of preparing chemistry students for graduate/professional school or for employment in government and industry. Our program is accredited and strongly controlled by the American Chemical Society, the governing body of most college-level chemistry programs. The major requires course work in the standard five disciplines of chemistry (general, organic, inorganic, analytical, and physical chemistry). Our faculty expertise in environmental chemistry, interfacial science, and polymer science adds additional breadth through effective course offerings.

2. General Description of the Chemistry Department

The chemistry department at Whitman College is fairly typical for a liberal arts college of our size. We have tenure-track lines in the traditional fields of chemistry (inorganic, organic, physical, analytical, and biochemical). Our current faculty members consist of the following:

Tenure Track:

Assistant Professor Allison Calhoun

Disciplines: Physical, Environmental, and Interfacial Chemistry

Course Responsibilities: Accelerated Chemistry, Physical Chemistry, Advanced Laboratory Methods, and Aqueous Geochemistry

Associate Professor Frank M. Dunnivant

Disciplines: Analytical, Environmental, and Chemical Education

Course Responsibilities: General Chemistry, Environmental Chemistry and Engineering (a non-science majors course), Environmental Chemistry and Science (a junior level chemistry course), and Instrumental Methods of Analysis

Assistant Professor Timothy Machonkin

(replacement for Professor Templeton who retired in 2006)

Disciplines: Analytical, Inorganic Chemistry, and Metalloenzymes

Course Responsibilities: General, Analytical, and Inorganic Chemistry

Associate Professor Ruth Russo

(shared position with Jim Russo)

Disciplines: Biochemistry

Course Responsibilities: General Chemistry and General Studies

Associate Professor Jim Russo

(shared position with Ruth Russo)

Disciplines: Biochemistry

Course Responsibilities: General Chemistry, Biochemistry

Professor Charles Templeton

(retired Spring, 2006)

Disciplines: Analytical and Inorganic

Course Responsibilities: General, Analytical, and Inorganic Chemistry

Professor Leroy Wade

Disciplines: Organic Chemistry and Chemical Education

Course Responsibilities: Organic Chemistry

Non-Tenure Track:

Instructor Deborah Simon

Disciplines: Chemical Education

Course Responsibilities: General Chemistry Laboratory and Chemistry of Art

For the last three years we have had a full-time visiting professor to teach general chemistry lecture and laboratory. We hope to make this a tenure-track position in the near future.

Staff:

Karen Smith

Responsibilities: Laboratory and Stockroom Manager

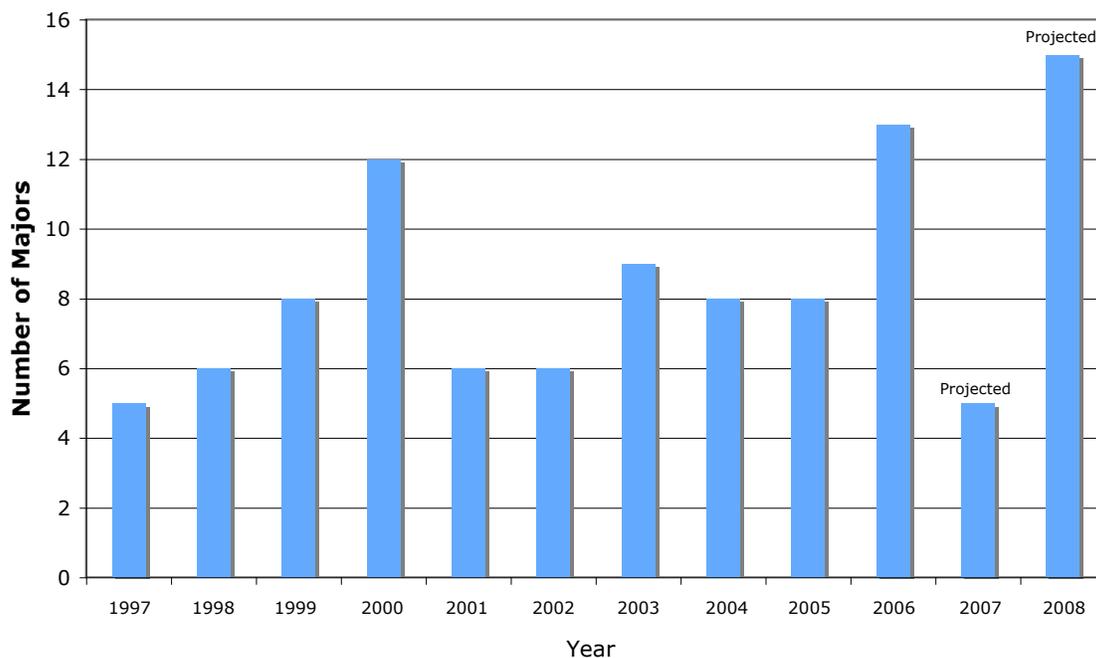
There have been several significant changes in the chemistry department since our last accreditation, including staffing and programmatic changes.

In 1999, we added a new tenure-track line in Environmental Chemistry, filled by Frank Dunnivant. In the fall of 2002, a new Physical Chemist, Allison Calhoun, joined us. This spring, our Analytical and Inorganic Chemist, Charles Templeton retired and was replaced with Timothy Machonkin. In the fall of 2006, we interviewed candidates and hired a replacement for Skip Wade who will be retiring in December of 2007. We hope to add an additional tenure-track line, in the area of Organic Chemistry next year.

Shortly after our last accreditation, we started having difficulties in staffing our junior- and senior- level chemistry courses, due to high enrollments in the introductory courses and due to staffing limitations. In the fall of 2004, we resolved this problem by combining four of our upper-level laboratory courses into two integrated laboratories, which allowed us to teach techniques in organic, inorganic, analytical (instrumental), and physical chemistry over a year long advanced lab sequence. This rearrangement has also allowed us to offer specialty courses from time to time such as an advanced instrumentation course and aqueous geochemistry. In the future we also plan to offer an advanced analytical instrumentation course for all science majors.

The number of majors has varied considerably over the last ten years (see graph on page 192), but may be on an increase due to the construction of the new chemistry wing in the Hall of Science; it is too early to tell. The obvious dip in enrollment this year (2007) can be attributed to a notably poor sabbatical replacement in organic chemistry during 2005 that we feel impacted the selection of chemistry as a major. Sabbatical replacements and visiting professors in chemistry have been problematic for the last several years. We hope to resolve part of this problem in the near future by converting our annual visiting professor position to a tenure-track line.

Summary of Chemistry Majors



3 and 4. Assessment and Effectiveness & Analysis and Projection

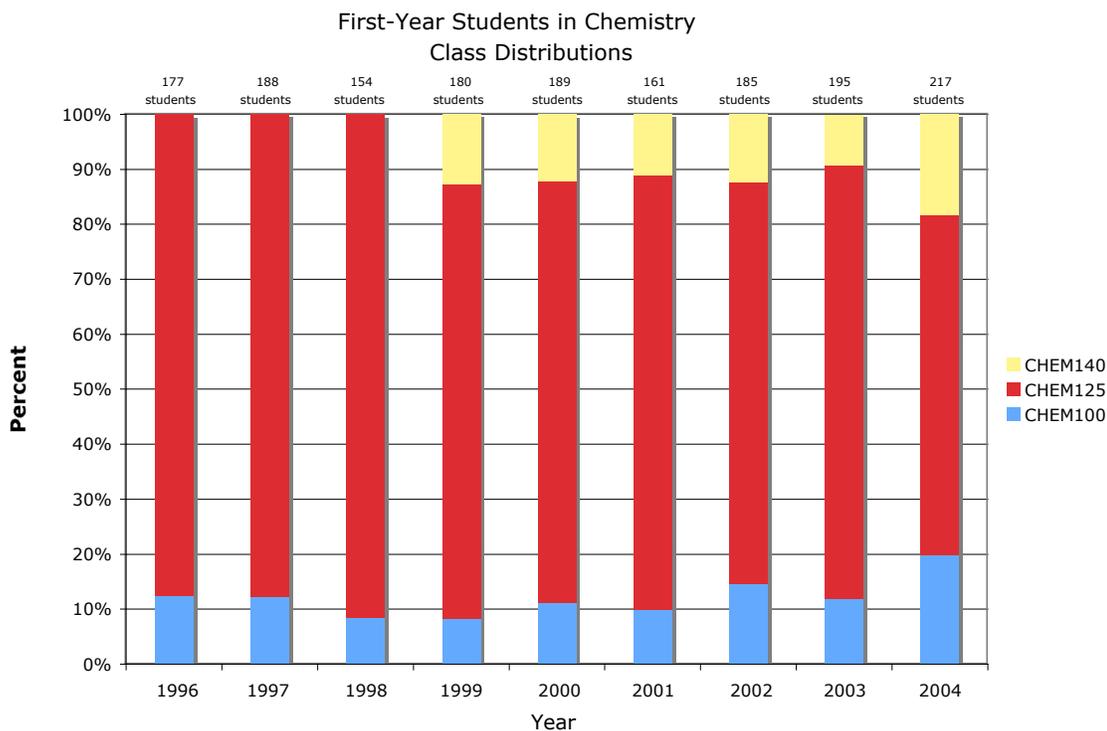
Critical Evaluation and effectiveness:

In section one, we listed three major objectives of the chemistry department, to contribute to the overall mission of broad-based liberal arts education, to service the other natural science degree programs, and to educate chemists for graduate school, professional schools, and industry.

Years ago, chemistry departments around the country realized that the standard general chemistry course is a poor choice for students not majoring in chemistry. It is universally designed as a background course on the history of chemistry and the theory of atomic structure, and this approach has generally disinterested general education students to chemistry and, in general, to science. Recognizing this, numerous professors have written textbooks and designed courses to teach chemistry in a thematic way. Examples include introductory courses in biochemistry and health, environmental science, chemistry of art, and many others. Our chemistry department has offered a course in Chemistry of the Natural World (Chem100) since before our last accreditation. After the hiring of our environmental chemist in 1999, this course slowly transformed to a service course for humanities and social science students in our Environmental Studies Program. In 2004, we changed the title of this course to Environmental Chemistry and Engineering. Since 1999, enrollment in Chem100 has increased from approximately 15 to 45 students. Building on our success of creating a more conducive environment for students not majoring in a natural science, we are creating a Chemistry of Art (Chem 102) in the spring of 2007. This course has already created considerable interest among the faculty and students around campus.

Another example of students that Chemistry 125 does not serve well is our entering first-year students that are exceptionally prepared to major in the natural sciences. For years, we have found that these students, numbering from 20 to 40, became bored in our traditional general chemistry sequence and in some cases were actually frustrated with chemistry due to the relatively slow pace of this course. To accommodate these students we created an Accelerated General Chemistry course (Chem 140) in 1999. Enrollment has also increased in this course to approximately 40 students.

A summary of enrollment distributions in our first-year chemistry courses is shown in the following figure. Course evaluations and conversations with students strongly indicate that students in Chem 100 and Chem 140 are much more pleased with the course content as compared to similar students enrolling in Chem 125/126 in previous years. We plan to keep the enrollment of Chem 100 at 40, Chem 140 at 40, and hope to have approximately 25 to 40 students in Chem 102.



Our final goal was to effectively educate our chemistry majors. Since 1996, 44 of our 70 (63 %) chemistry majors have gone on to graduate school, with the remainder mostly going into industry or government. We anticipate that interest in chemistry will increase in the coming years based on recent enrollments, declarations of majors, our new chemistry laboratories, and interest from the biology and biochemistry departments in emphasizing the inter-relationship between chemistry and the biological sciences.

Another form of assessment is how well our current faculty members meet the needs of our curriculum and student enrollments. In this area, we mostly have success, with one weakness. In general, our chemistry department matches the needs of our student body very well. Again, we cover all of the traditional fields in chemistry while branching out into several specialty fields. Our one weakness is our high enrollments in the organic chemistry sequence (90 during the fall and 75 during the spring) with only one organic chemist. This creates considerable stress for our organic chemist and prevents him from being involved in upper-level courses. Our plan to solve this problem is to add an additional tenure-track line in organic chemistry in the near future.

Infrastructure:

In the fall of 2002 the chemistry department moved in to their new lab and office space and this move transformed our teaching of chemistry at Whitman. Lab space was greatly expanded in the new wing allowing new teaching pedagogies and considerably more attention to safety. After only a year in the new wing, we looked back and could not remember how we managed with the outdated and overcrowded facilities. The

careful design of the office, lecture, and lab space has served the entire science division well, as chemistry is mostly a service department.

With the new physical space the chemistry faculty saw a need to update our instrumentation. Prior to our moving into the new wing we had only a permanent magnet NMR adequate for teaching organic chemistry, a dated UV-Vis spectrophotometer system, an outdated atomic absorption unit, a packed column gas chromatograph, and a functional, but dated gas chromatography-mass spectroscopy system. With internal funding from the College, we have purchased new analytical instrumentation, including a UV-Vis spectrophotometer, a fluorescence spectrophotometer, two capillary column gas chromatographs (with flame and electron capture detectors), an IR spectrophotometer, and a high performance liquid chromatograph. Through actively sought-out donations from governmental agencies, we have also acquired a number of valuable used instruments, including two atomic absorption spectrophotometers, a high performance liquid chromatograph, an ion chromatograph, a capillary column chromatograph (flame ionization detection), and a total organic carbon analyzer. We have also obtained two instruments from industry, at minimal cost, including a 200 MHz NMR and a capillary column gas chromatograph with dual electron capture detectors.

Faculty members from the science departments have recently decided to pool their resources and create an Analytical Instrumentation Center funded from a \$500,000.00 internal instrumentation upgrade fund from the new building effort and with external funding. We were recently awarded a \$181,500.00 grant from the Murdock Trust and \$50,000.00 from the Dreyfus Foundation for a new capillary column gas chromatograph-mass spectrometer with hard and soft ionization (GC-MS), a capillary electrophoresis (CE) system, and an Inductive Coupled Plasma-Mass Spectrometer (ICP-MS). Science faculty members are currently seeking funding for a x-ray diffraction system (from NSF) and a scanning electron microscope (from the Keck Foundation). We also plan to update our NMR system in the near future.

All of these efforts, current and future, will create one of the best-equipped undergraduate analytical facilities for a college of our size. We are already confident that students completing our laboratory courses receive some of the best hands-on experiences of any college. This is not just our opinion, but is based on student comments after they enter graduate school or industry and compare their educational experiences to their peers.

Accreditation Self-Study
Environmental Studies

Introduction

The Environmental Studies (ES) program was founded by Ted Anderson in 1970, the year of the first Earth Day. From 1971 through 1991, it was directed mostly by Craig Gunsul, who had a joint appointment in Physics and ES. Bob Carson has taught in the program since 1991, with one two-year gap. Jan Mejer directed the program from 1993 until his death in 1998, when he evaluated the program and made recommendations. Phil Brick and Bob Carson currently co-direct the program.

Curriculum

The curriculum is clearly outlined in “The Catalog of the College,” 2006-2007, p. 79-86.

1. In the first or second year a student takes “Introduction to Environmental Studies,” team taught by an environmental geologist (Carson) and an environmental sociologist (Norgaard). Both professors are knowledgeable about biology in general and ecosystems in particular. Biology, the heart of many environmental programs, is stressed in class and on excursions. The professors also address economics (e.g., debt-for-nature swaps), politics (e.g., nuclear waste disposal), and pollution (e.g., acid deposition). There is a particular emphasis on energy and global climate change. The class, limited to 28 students, always has a waiting list. Students wanting to major in ES must earn at least a C in this course.
2. In the second or third year ES majors participate in one or more semesters of an internship. Internships provide students with the opportunity to learn outside the classroom, to gain real world experience, and to share their energy and enthusiasm with the larger local community. Working directly in the environmental field, students begin to understand some the complexities associated with addressing environmental issues as well as to test some of the ideas and theories encountered in courses. Internships are available with a wide range of environmental organizations, from local, state, and federal agencies, to non-profit environmental groups, to campus environmental groups. Agencies and organizations such as the US Forest Service, National Park Service, Tri-State Steelheaders, Walla Walla Watershed Alliance, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla, Kooskooskie Commons, City of Walla Walla, Whitman College Conservation and Recycling Committee, Walla Walla 2020, and many other organizations have worked with ES student interns.
3. At the same time students are taking environmental studies courses, they are also taking courses in one of eight concentrations (biology, chemistry, economics, geology, humanities, physics, politics, or sociology, and they are taking at least one course in most of these subjects (see Program Goal #1). These requirements are clearly explained on p. 79-81 of “The Catalog of the College,” 2006-2007.
4. In the fall of the senior year ES majors take two courses:
 - A. “Environmental Citizenship and Leadership”
 - B. “Senior Project Preparation” directs ES majors in the development of their senior project or thesis. During this course students are expected to develop sound research proposals. Students present their work to fellow students for discussion and refinement.
5. In the spring of the senior year ES majors complete a senior project or thesis in conjunction with their home department. For example, one geology-ES major did field work on dunes in Mongolia and related these dunes to the expansion of the Gobi (Desert) in China and Mongolia due to over grazing and other factors.
6. Also in their last semester, students take major examinations. The ES program uses the guidelines of

the participating departments, so the examination may be oral or written (or both), and they may be comprehensive or based on the thesis (or both).

Faculty

Phil Brick, Professor of Politics, significant contributor to ES

Bob Carson, Professor of Geology & ES, half time appointment, but essentially two-thirds time ES

Amy Molitor, internship director and GIS teacher, half time

Kari Norgaard, Assistant Professor of Sociology and ES, half time appointment with additional contributions to ES

Don Snow, Senior Lecturer of Environmental Humanities and General Studies, two-thirds time ES

The following faculty members teach one or two courses per year for the ES program:

Mark Beck, Associate Professor of Physics

Jan Crouter, Associate Professor of Economics

Tom Davis, Associate Professor of Philosophy

Frank Dunnivant, Associate Professor of Chemistry

Rebecca Hanrahan, Assistant Professor of Philosophy

Delbert Hutchison, Associate Professor of Biology

Other Resources (not all entirely for ES)

Environmental Studies Center (2002): In the west wing of Maxey Hall, this facility has 5 faculty offices and a seminar room for 30.

Johnston Wilderness Campus (1998): A half hour's drive from campus, the 25-acre site in a canyon in the Blue Mountains lies between Mill Creek and the Umatilla National Forest. Classes and labs may meet outdoors and/or in any of several buildings.

Semester In The West (begun in 2002): Phil Brick, assisted by other professors, directs this off-campus program every other fall. About 20 students camp their way around the West, focusing on politics, writing, and natural history.

Environmental Interest House (1981): Originally founded as the Outdoor-Environmental Interest House, this is home to about 10 students who work with the Campus Greens, the Whitman College Conservation Committee, and others to "think globally, act locally." The roof has photovoltaics and solar thermal devices, and the College recycling center is in the garage.

Endowments

Anonymous fund for "outdoor environmental leadership."

Benedict fund for books and journals related to ES.

Benedict fund for visiting educators in ES.

Hurlow fund for students for environmental theses, projects, and meetings

Work fund for students for environmental theses, projects, and meetings.

Enrollments

Whitman's ES program started with a bang, tripling from 5 ES-science combined majors graduating in 1974, to 15 ES-science and ES-social science graduates in 1977. Then followed a decline to 4 to 7 graduates in each of the years 1979 - 1985. In the next 8 years (1986-1993) there were only 9 ES graduates. Then the surge began: 11-17 graduates each year 1994-2000, 24-30 graduates each year 2001-2006. At present, there is an increase in environmental humanities students because of the new major.

Major Changes In The Past Decade

1. Introduction of the new Environmental Humanities major, with emphasis in philosophy, literature, and writing.
2. New requirement that all majors must take two environmental humanities courses.
3. Change in the beginning courses. Formerly there were two 3-credit classes, each with a required internship, and with 2-3 short field trips each semester. Now we have one 4-credit class (with longer excursions each week), plus a 1-credit internship.
4. Changes in the capstone courses. Formally we had a “senior seminar” with reading, discussion, and preliminary presentation of senior theses; it seemed to lack focus. Now we have a 2-credit “Environmental Citizenship and Leadership” to be taught by three faculty (humanities, social science, and science); there are many visiting professionals in the environmental field, plus problem solving. In addition, we have a 1-credit “Senior Project Preparation” in which each ES senior presents the preliminary results of his/her thesis.
5. Addition of new faculty positions in environmental fields.
 - A. Don Snow, in environmental literature and nature writing.
 - B. Rebecca Hanrahan, in environmental philosophy.
 - C. Delbert Hutchison, in conservation biology and evolution.
6. Additions of new environmental courses by new faculty in biology (Conservation Biology), chemistry (Environmental Chemistry and Science), economics (Transportation and the Environment), philosophy (Animals and Philosophy), physics (Energy and the Environment), politics (Whitman in the Global Food System), and sociology (Environmental Justice).
7. Modifications of existing courses to make them more environmental. Examples include Introduction to Environmental Chemistry, Principles of Economics and the Environment, and Late Cenozoic Geology and Climate Change.
8. Gift by two alumni of the Johnston Wilderness Campus (see Other Resources).
9. Construction of Environmental Studies Center in Maxey Hall (See Other Resources).
10. Introduction of the Semester in The West Program (see Other Resources).
11. Almost-every-summer 10-day trips to the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. This for-credit journey focuses on natural history, plus the environmental problems of the first national park.

Program Goals

1. The primary goal is to offer an interdisciplinary environmental education as part of the liberal arts mission of Whitman College. In contrast to taking a few environmental courses in each of several disciplines (the “jack of all trades, master of none” model), our students concentrate in one of eight areas (biology, chemistry, economics, geology, humanities, politics, physics, or sociology), and take at least one course in at least six of these areas. Our rationale is that most environmental problems are solved by teams of experts (e.g., a conservation biologist, an environmental chemist, a natural resources economist, and a rural sociologist) who can communicate with each other. Because all environmental studies majors must take a minimum of two humanities courses, three science courses, and two social science courses, these students are well on their way to satisfying the College’s general studies distribution requirements.

2. Another goal is gaining a sense of place, meaning the region where most of our students spend at least four years of their lives. This goal is accomplished as follows:
 - A. Weekly excursions in our introductory course: the campus, a Native American cultural institute, a Snake River dam, a wind farm, the municipal watershed, water and wastewater treatment plants, the dump, a flood control project, a canyon in the desert, volunteering for stream restoration, a tree plantation, a farm, a private forest, and the Umatilla National Forest.
 - B. Field trips in biology, geology, politics, and sociology courses.
 - C. Trips to the Johnston Wilderness Campus.
 - D. Reading about, discussing, and writing on local issues.
 - E. A minimum of one semester as an intern for a local government or non-profit organization.

3. Our students should be able to think, analyze, and write well. This goal is accomplished as follows:
 - A. Six papers are required in the introductory course; some may be letters-to-the-editor, or letters to elected and appointed government officials. (The Walla Walla Union-Bulletin is publishing one energy paper per week.)
 - B. Writing in other ES-related courses, particularly in Don Snow's course "The Nature Essay."
 - C. A required senior project. The work is begun in the summer before or the fall of the senior year. Written and oral progress reports take place in late fall. Each student generally works with two professors (one in his/her discipline, the other in ES), and completes a senior thesis in the spring.

4. Our students should have quantitative and computer skills. Ways that they develop these skills include:
 - A. Quantitative aspects of particular ES-related courses in science and economics (e.g., plots, statistics).
 - B. Limited quantitative problem-solving in the introductory course (e.g., benefit-cost analyses, pollution trading)
 - C. Posters are made with computer illustrator programs at the conclusion of the required environmental internship.
 - D. PowerPoint presentations are required in two required senior courses (Environmental Citizenship and Leadership, Senior Project Preparation).
 - E. We have added a new Geographic Information Systems (GIS) laboratory and we now offer a 3-credit GIS course each semester.

5. Our students should be able to get into graduate school with funding and get jobs. To the best of our knowledge:
 - A. Every student who has applied to grad school has gained entrance and support (perhaps not to his/her first choice). Examples range from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies to the environmental and natural resources law program at Lewis & Clark College.
 - B. Every student who has attempted to get an environmental job has been successful (perhaps not in the first month after graduation). Examples include the Peace Corps and the Public Interest Research Groups.
 - C. In addition, our students have been very successful at obtaining summer environmental internships. Examples include non-profits like the Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council and government agencies like the U.S. Geological Survey.

6. Our graduates should contribute to their communities. Many have had environment-related internships before becoming ES majors. Each student participates in at least one semester of our Environmental Internship course. Many students volunteer in local schools, e.g., by participating in "Environmental Education for Kids." In 2006 three ES seniors were featured in the local newspaper because they volunteered to teach "problem" high school students about global climate change.

7. Our students should think globally. “Pollution needs no passport!”
 - A. Students learn about global climate change, poverty and hunger, environmental injustice, deforestation, etc., in courses.
 - B. The overwhelming majority of ES majors take a semester of foreign study, e.g., to one of the five programs of the School for Field Studies, which emphasizes ecology and environmental social science.
 - C. Almost every year there is a trip to Latin America, Africa, or Eurasia for ES credit. In Bulgaria, for example, we visited more than a dozen government and non-profit environmental organizations. Unfortunately, such trips are expensive.

Assessment and Effectiveness

Assessment and effectiveness have already been partly addressed in this self-study. For example, the gifts (see Endowments) would not be given by alumni if they do not believe ES at Whitman is effective. A recent example is the \$20,000 gift by two anonymous alumni for “outdoor environmental leadership.” The number of graduates per year has doubled in the past decade (see Enrollments). Our students are very successful at getting into the best graduate schools and obtaining internships and permanent jobs with industry, non-profits, and government organizations (see Goals 4 and 5).

If anything, the ES program has been over-assessed. In most areas, by most measures, it has been highly effective. In the assessment and effectiveness statement that follows, the emphasis is on assessments that have resulted in changes.

1. In the past there was a perception among some faculty that ES majors were weak, that they could avoid some upper level courses in a particular discipline by being an ES combined major rather than a “straight” major. It is not necessarily easy for a sociology-ES major to take science classes, or for a biology-ES major to take social science and humanities courses. Despite the fact that ES combined majors take about two fewer courses than “straight” majors, they do very well in major exams and on theses. As examples, in 2006, the best politics thesis was written by a politics-ES major, and the top two geology majors (by GPA) were geology-ES majors.
2. Jan Mejer, former director of ES, assessed the program and wrote a vision statement on his death bed in 1998. Here are his major recommendations and the results:
 - A. Recommendation: Add humanities to science and social science.

Results: We hired Don Snow (environmental literature and writing) and Rebecca Hanrahan (environmental philosophy) in the past 5 years. We just added an Environmental Humanities major to the other 7 ES areas. Two environmental humanities courses are required of all ES majors.

Problem: Don Snow was full time environmental humanities for 5 years, with a waiting list for every class. The grant that brought him here ran out, and the College maintains that it has only enough funds to have him in ES two-thirds time. Given the popularity of his courses and the incorporation of the humanities into the ES program, his reduced offerings are a misfortune.

- B. Recommendation: Add more biology to the ES program. (This recommendation was endorsed by the faculty in science and mathematics, who made their first choice for a science addition a professor in biology-environmental studies.)

Result: Delbert Hutchison was hired.

Problem: Due to commitments in the biology curriculum, Delbert reduced the “Conservation Biology” offering from twice to once a year. Although he increased the class size, scheduling for ES majors is difficult.

- C. Recommendation: Add a field station.

Result: Days before Jan’s death we learned that the College had been given the Johnston Wilderness Campus (JWC).

Problem: Due in part to College policy of no classes between 4 and 6 pm, the JWC is underutilized. Before this policy was instituted, ES courses often met at the JWC for potluck suppers and late afternoon or evening classes.

3. Almost every ES course is evaluated by students every semester, and these evaluations are given to the Dean of the Faculty. The results of evaluations of team-taught courses are discussed by the faculty involved.
- A. Recommendation: Change the introductory course. Make it more field oriented.
- Result: This was done (see changes #3).
- B. Recommendation: Radically change the capstone courses. E.g., add more science.
- Result: This was done (see change #4). All that survived was the oral presentation of preliminary senior thesis results.
4. Every hire of a new faculty member involves an assessment of needs.
- A. Recommendation: Add someone in the area of environmental literature/nature writing. After the grant that brought Don Snow here ran out, we did a nationwide search for a permanent faculty member in this area.
- Result: Everything that Don does is excellent, so he was chosen over dozens of other applicants.
- Problem: Don is only two-thirds time (see #2 above).
- B. Recommendation: When a philosophy professor retires, add an environmental philosopher.
- Result: After a nationwide search, we hired Rebecca Hanrahan, who has been a great part-time addition to the ES program.
5. In the spring of his/her senior year, every ES major writes a thorough evaluation of our program. These are reviewed by core ES faculty, and their recommendations are taken seriously. In addition, and on their own, the ES majors (mostly seniors and juniors) undertook a complete review of the program; they then held two meetings with ES faculty. Overall, these written and oral evaluations give the program high marks, but the students asked for a few changes.
- A. Recommendation: More weekend field trips like the ones Phil Brick leads to the Wallowa Lake area and like those the Department of Geology takes every semester to various places in the Pacific Northwest. The proposed ES trips would be for credit, but shorter and less expensive than the ones Bob Carson leads to the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem and abroad.
- Result: The core ES faculty will attempt to lead such excursions (perhaps the Columbia River

Gorge fall 2006 and a whitewater trip spring 2007).

Problem: The core ES faculty already have course overloads.

- B. Recommendation: More elective course offerings in the ES program. Even “Water Resources”, the most popular elective, is offered only every two years or so.

Results: Thanks to an increase in Amy Molitor’s position, “Introduction to Geographic Information Systems” (GIS) will be offered every semester. The old “glacial Geology” course has a new name (“Late Cenozoic Geology and Climate Change”) and will focus on global climate change.

Problems: Many courses that could be considered ES electives have prerequisites, making it difficult for ES students to “jump in” to the course. Without more funding, it is nearly impossible to add new ES electives.

- 6. The ES Committee meets now and then to assess our program and its effectiveness.

- A. Recommendation: Add a humanities component.

Result: Done

- B. Recommendation: Because the core ES faculty teach “Senior Project Preparation” as an overload and are second readers on large numbers of ES senior theses, add more faculty to help with these tasks.

Result: Delbert Hutchison has generously agreed to help in 2006-2007, as an overload.

Problem: Any ES faculty member helping with “Senior Project Preparation” and senior theses outside his/her discipline does so as an overload.

- 7. The Dean and key members of the ES faculty assess the leadership needs of the program. At first Bob Carson and Phil Brick had 3-year successive terms as Director, but nearly half the time one of them is on sabbatical leave or leading Semester In The West. The current system is to have each as a Co-Director. When practical, Phil leads long-range planning efforts (e.g., faculty additions, the new Environmental Humanities major, the ES Center) and Bob oversees short-term logistics (e.g., budget, catalog changes, class schedules).

Quantitative Data

We were given masses of numerical data by Neal Christopherson. With 5-29 students per ES course, our class sizes seem reasonable. Some of Neal’s data may be misleading:

- 1. Environmental Studies is listed as having 16 graduates per tenure track position (last 5 years). This is more than twice as high as any department. We are a program with help from many departments.
- 2. Our load (integrated method) is higher than that of any departments except Astronomy and Sports Studies; it is more than twice as high as that of some areas.
- 3. Our junior/senior majors per faculty (as of April 2006) is 3 times higher than that of any department. Although we share most of our majors with other departments, Don Snow’s load is particularly high: already 8 students graduating in 2008 have declared an Environmental Humanities major.

Future Plans, And Questions

1. The numbers of ES majors are likely to grow overall, and certainly are skyrocketing in Environmental Humanities. Our top priority should be to get Don Snow back in ES full time; he is needed back in “Senior Project Preparation” because he is the adviser for so many senior theses, because all ES majors are required to take 2 environmental humanities courses, and because his classes should be open to more than ES majors. Indeed, the numbers justify two professors in environmental literature and nature writing.
2. Our introductory course and biology, chemistry, politics, and sociology courses required for the major fill every semester. These courses should have room for more students who are not ES majors. Ideally there would be more sections of these courses, or more courses; either way, more faculty are needed.
3. If our number of seniors per year increases from about 30 to about 40, should we have 2 sections each of “Senior Project Preparation” and “Environmental Citizenship and Leadership”? We think it is important to bring all ES seniors together for a capstone, but how big can classes get?
4. Have an alumni survey. What are they doing? Looking back years or even decades, what would they change about our ES program?

Overall Assessment

With the exception of a dire shortage of courses in environmental literature and nature writing, the program is doing well. “If it ain’t broke, why fix it?”

How This Self Study Was Conducted

Some members of the ES program heard presentations by Kurt Hoffman (science) and Matt Prull (social science). Bob Carson (science) wrote the first draft, and forwarded it to the entire 10-person Environmental Studies Committee for comment, corrections, additions and deletions. Phil Brick (social science) and Don Snow (humanities) edited and completed the document.

Appendices are available in the Accreditation Exhibit Room.

Accreditation Self-Study
Department of Geology

Goals

The Department of Geology strives to provide our majors with the skills and background knowledge necessary to pursue independent investigations in the earth sciences. Our courses at all levels are also designed to prepare students for informed engagement with local, national, and global issues related to the earth and environment. As a liberal arts natural sciences department, we seek to train our students to make careful observations in both laboratory and field settings and to use those observations in critical and scientific analyses of the earth and its processes. Our students must also demonstrate competence in expression, both orally and in writing. A graduating geology major should be adequately prepared to further their education in graduate school or to seek employment in the geosciences.

Program Description

The department is staffed by three professors and one assistant professor. Three of the positions are full-time geology and one is split with the environmental studies program. Since 1997, the only change in staff has been the replacement of John Winter by Kirsten Nicolaysen in the area of mineralogy/petrology/geochemistry. Changes to the curriculum in the last 10 years reflect an increasing emphasis on the relationships between humans and the earth. Although the courses required of geology majors have not changed, students now have the opportunity to take elective courses in Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Late Cenozoic Geology and Climate Change, Weather and Climate, and Geology of the Pacific Northwest. Since there has been no increase in staff, these courses represent new offerings by existing or temporary faculty. The department offers five courses, The Physical Earth, Geology of the Pacific Northwest, Weather and Climate, Environmental Geology, and History of the Earth that are suitable for non-majors. All of these courses are routinely full (40 students) or over-enrolled. Enrollments average between 15 and 20 students in required upper division courses and 6 to 12 students in upper division electives. In order to accommodate the large enrollments in lower division introductory courses the faculty have routinely offered two laboratory sections for each course. The extra laboratory section has been a voluntary addition to the normal teaching load expected of the science faculty at Whitman. The department has decided that beginning in the fall of 2006 it will limit enrollments in introductory classes to levels that require only one laboratory per course.

The physical space occupied by the geology department was greatly improved and expanded when the new wing of the Hall of Science was completed in 2004. The department now has a new computer laboratory, X-Ray diffraction laboratory, geographic information systems laboratory, and expanded office and research space for students and faculty. The department utilizes two new “smart” classrooms in the new wing and the geology classrooms in the older part of the building are scheduled to be upgraded.

In the near future, the department would like to increase the faculty by at least a half time position and preferably a full time position. This would enable us to fill the gaping hole in our curriculum represented by the absence of any courses in hydrology and the lack of permanent staffing in GIS.

Assessment Methods

The department gathers information from a variety of sources to assess its effectiveness. The most direct information is obtained from graduating seniors who are required to take oral and written comprehensive exams and complete a questionnaire as part of the Senior Seminar course. The oral and written exams are administered by all faculty members and the results are discussed in department meetings. On the questionnaire seniors comment on the effectiveness of all aspects of the geology major including required and supporting courses, field camp, field trips, major exams, research experiences, and preparation for graduate school and jobs. The completed questionnaires are circulated to all faculty members after the seniors have graduated and discussed at department meetings. We do our best to track our students after they graduate and we encourage our students that have entered graduate programs to offer feedback on the effectiveness of their undergraduate education. The department’s membership in the Keck Geology Consortium provides a useful

means of comparison with geology departments at similar institutions. The Keck Geology Consortium consists of 12 geology departments at selective liberal arts colleges that are similar to Whitman. The students at all departments compete with one another for the opportunity to participate in summer research projects that are funded by the consortium. The level of participation of each school's students reflects the quality of those students and the department's enthusiasm for promoting undergraduate research.

Goals Assessment

In general, our students are meeting the department goals. They are routinely accepted into excellent graduate schools and faculty at those institutions occasionally contact us requesting that we encourage more of our seniors to apply to their programs. Obviously, they are satisfied with our students' level of preparedness. Rarely, however, do our graduates choose to pursue advanced degrees in the rapidly expanding fields of hydrology and hydrogeology since they have no background in those subjects.

Every year, many of our senior thesis students present the results of their projects at regional and national meetings. The quality of their work at least equals and usually exceeds that of other undergraduate students. Although our graduates lack some of the practical skills that are often required by the consulting, engineering, and minerals extraction industries, many of them have successfully pursued careers in those fields. The feedback that we receive from managers is that our students have excellent critical thinking skills and are quick learners.

Program Assessment

The geology department at Whitman is thriving in spite of its somewhat antiquated curriculum. We regularly graduate more majors and combined majors than all but one of the other 11 schools in the Keck consortium. We are also one of the top schools in the consortium with regard to the number of students that are accepted for summer research projects.

For the last 20 years, geology departments throughout the U.S. have modified their curricula to place more emphasis on interactions between humans and the earth. Courses in hydrology, GIS, low-temperature geochemistry, and geo-engineering are now considered as important to the education of an earth scientist as more traditional core courses such as paleontology and mineralogy. As a small department, we have struggled with these changes. We presently have no faculty capable of teaching any of the four subjects listed above. Our graduating seniors and alumni routinely comment on the lack of these courses in their assessments of our program. Our 3.5 faculty are barely sufficient to cover the traditional core areas of sedimentary/paleontology, mineralogy/petrology, structure/tectonics, and geomorphology/surficial processes. We have added or modified a few courses, but these efforts fall well short of the major curriculum up-grade that is needed. The college has recognized the importance of GIS and has funded the installation of a GIS lab in our department. However, the college has no tenured or tenure-track faculty capable of teaching a GIS course. In order to upgrade our program to modern standards, the geology department needs to be expanded by at least one position so that our needs in hydrology and GIS can be met.

Our department is in need of major upgrades to our analytical facilities. Fortunately, several new instruments will be purchased during the next two years. With funds obtained through collaboration with the chemistry department, the geology department will soon gain access to a new electron microscope, x-ray diffraction unit, and a mass spectrometer.

Assessment

The department considers our means of self-assessment to be adequate. It would be helpful however to have more input from recently graduated alumni. Perhaps a questionnaire should routinely be sent to alumni on the third year after their graduation. We have found the comments on the senior questionnaire to be especially valuable. Unfortunately, most of the negative comments center around our inability to offer courses in hydrology or more electives, issues which can only be addressed by adding new faculty.

Accreditation Self-Study
Department of Mathematics

1 Goals

1.1 Department Role.

Before we present the goals of our department, it is important to understand the role of the Mathematics and Computer Science Department at Whitman College. The department's role in the overall educational program of the College has four main aspects:

First, and most important from the point of view of the College as a whole, are the service courses in calculus, differential equations, linear algebra, statistics, and computer programming that we provide for majors in the physical and social sciences.

Second, we offer major programs in mathematics with a "pure" option for students interested in graduate study in mathematics and an "applied" option for students interested in immediate entry into the workforce or continuing education in one of the many new Professional Masters degree programs in applied mathematics departments across the country. Additionally, in cooperation with other departments, we offer combined majors in mathematics–physics and economics–mathematics, and minor programs in mathematics and computer science.

Third, we offer a few courses with no prerequisites that meet the needs of students seeking to satisfy the recently adopted college-wide Quantitative Literacy requirement. These include our non-technical, Introduction to Mathematical Thinking course for designed for students that are simply curious about mathematics.

Fourth, one member of our department coordinates and directs the 3–2 engineering program which allows students to spend 3 years of study at Whitman and 2 years of study at a partner engineering or computer science school. At the conclusion of the 5 years of study, the student receives a bachelor's degree from Whitman and a bachelor's degree from the partner institution. This program draws a number of capable science students to the College.

1.2 Department Goals.

In early 2003, a member of the mathematics department retired. As part of our proposal to retain this position, the members of the department re-assessed the departmental goals.

With respect to our contributions to the general education of students and minor programs, we strive to make students aware that mathematics, in addition to being a useful tool for modeling and solving many real world problems, is a powerful method of reasoning that stresses clarity, elegance, intuition, and proof and that it is a beautiful subject worthy of study for its own sake. Within this framework, each of the courses offered by our department has its own objectives and goals which are developed and assessed by individual instructors.

In terms of our major programs, the successful mathematics major will be able to:

1. solve mathematical problems;
2. communicate mathematical ideas effectively both orally and in writing;
3. learn new mathematics independently;
4. evaluate mathematical arguments;
5. create abstract quantitative frameworks;
6. have depth of study in at least one area of mathematics;
7. have basic understanding of several branches of mathematics.

Improved communication skills represent the main thrust of the changes in our goals. To support this new

emphasis and the other goals, changes to the major program and curriculum were adopted. We discuss the new curriculum as well as the overall academic program of the mathematics department in Section 2.

2 Program Description

A complete description of all courses, majors, minors and policies of the department is available in the College catalog. Here we present information that is not in the College catalog, or information that we specifically address in Section 4.

2.1 Personnel

There are 6 full-time, tenure-track positions in the department. Each position teaches 6 classes per year, 3 classes per semester. Currently, one of those positions is shared by a married couple. The College's generous sabbatical policy typically has us short one position each year and that position is usually filled by a temporary visiting professor.

The academic specialties of our department members (see vitas in the Accreditation Exhibit Room) are well-balanced and range from the purely abstract to the computational and applied. This broad range of interests allows us to offer both pure and applied concentrations in the major.

2.2 Course Offerings

Our course offerings are designed to fulfill the roles of service to the College's Quantitative Analysis requirement, to satisfy the needs of science majors, and to offer a well-rounded major program. Broadly speaking, the courses in the lower-division (numbered in the 200's and below) fulfill all three of these roles, while those in the upper-division (numbered in the 300's and above) address only the major program.

Most of the department's offerings are three credit courses, based on our assessment of difficulty and work load. Two of our most advanced courses (Abstract Algebra and Real Analysis) are four credits due to the degree of difficulty and the amount of work required. More recently Calculus III and Statistics have become 4 credit courses (see Section 2.2.2). The calculus laboratory is one credit, as is typical of most science laboratory courses, based on the expectation that it requires about three hours of work per week.

Curriculum changes are initiated by one or more members of the department in response to student demand, national trends, or personal interest. Frequently, the proposer has attended a workshop before or after the department decides to make the proposed change.

The two most significant changes to our course offerings in the last 10 years have been the addition of the year-long Senior Project course and the change from a 4-semester Calculus sequence to a 3-semester sequence. However, in the 2004-2005 academic year we also added Math 367 (Engineering Mathematics). The content in this course supports students in the 3-2 engineering, physics, and our own applied mathematics programs.

2.2.1 Senior Project

The Senior Project course was adopted in conjunction with the senior project major requirement. The purpose of the senior project is to support the departmental goals described in Section 1.2.

The senior project is a year-long sequence consisting of a 3 credit course in the fall and a 1 credit course in the spring. The specific content and structure of the courses may change depending upon the course coordinator. In general, during the fall semester students will select a project from among a list of topics generated by the members of the mathematics department. Each student is then paired with the faculty member who developed the selected project idea. Throughout the semester, in coordination with the faculty member, the student generates information about the topic through reading, research and problem solving. The majority of this work occurs outside of class. During the regular class meetings, students meet together and present oral

progress reports. Weekly written progress reports are also submitted and evaluated by the course coordinator for writing style and content.

During the spring semester, the information collected in the fall semester is distilled into a single cohesive written report and a concluding oral presentation. Students continue to meet regularly with their project advisors working towards this end. Students also continue to meet weekly in small groups with the course coordinator and “workshop” their writing. They share drafts and discuss aspects of mathematical writing and communication. The final papers are evaluated by the course coordinator for writing style and by the student’s faculty project advisor for content.

2.2.2 Calculus Sequence

In the 2001–2002 academic year, we changed our calculus sequence from a 4 semester sequence of 3 credit courses to a 3 semester sequence consisting of two 3 credit courses and a 4 credit course. Calculus IV, from the old 4 semester sequence, covered sequences and series, elementary differential equations, and some vector calculus. We moved the sequences and series unit into Calculus II, which was considered to be too light in content. The elementary differential equations unit was placed into our differential equations class. The new differential equations class was moved to the lower–division to reflect its more elementary approach. The vector calculus unit is now in Calculus III. We increased the number of credits for Calculus III from 3 to 4 in response to the increased workload and increased the number of class meetings from 3 per week to 4 per week.

The reasons for this were:

1. To address the uneven workload over the sequence of courses. In particular, Calculus II had markedly less content than either Calculus I, III or IV.
2. To eliminate some redundancy in content between Calculus IV and the upper–division differential equations course.
3. To shorten the length of time students must spend in lower–division courses before declaring a mathematics major and moving into the upper–division courses.
4. To align more closely the content of our Calculus I and II courses with high school advanced placement credit granted for the AB and BC tests, respectively.

2.3 Majors

In the 2003–2004 academic year, the department chose to create a mathematics major with an applied concentration. The motivation for this was to address the growing trend in graduate–level mathematics towards applied mathematics as demonstrated by the many new applied masters programs starting across the country, and to take advantage of the breadth of specialties in our own department which in recent years, through personnel changes, has become fairly balanced in both pure and applied disciplines. The requirements for the new major are in the college catalog.

Generally, students interested in graduate school or who are attracted to abstract mathematical pursuits follow the pure mathematics degree program. Students interested in applied masters degree programs, moving immediately into the workforce, or the applied aspects of mathematics follow the applied degree program. Additionally, students following the applied program are required to complete a minor course of study in some outside department, e.g. physics, economics or chemistry.

We also offer a mathematics–computer science major in our 3–2 program. Similar to the 3–2 engineering program, students complete the requirements of the computer science degree at a partner institution.

Finally, we offer combined majors in mathematics–physics and economics–mathematics. The requirements for these majors are in the college catalog. The requirements and assessment of students in these majors are managed jointly by the respective departments.

2.4 Service Courses and Minors

We offer minors in mathematics and in computer science. In addition, all of our courses satisfy the College's recently adopted Quantitative Analysis distribution requirement for all students.

About half of all majors offered by the College require at least one mathematics course either explicitly or implicitly via course prerequisites. The majority of these courses are from the calculus sequence.

2.5 Enrollments

We looked at longitudinal enrollment data for both the number of majors graduated and the number of students enrolled in the calculus sequence. The data are quite scattered, but show steady enrollments.

The number of mathematics, mathematics–physics and economics–mathematics degrees granted by year are given in Figure 1. There does not appear to be any kind of upward or downward trend in these data.

Figure 2 on the next page shows enrollments by year in our calculus sequence and our elementary statistics course. Like the number of majors graduated each year, these numbers fluctuate and exhibit no real upward or downward trends.

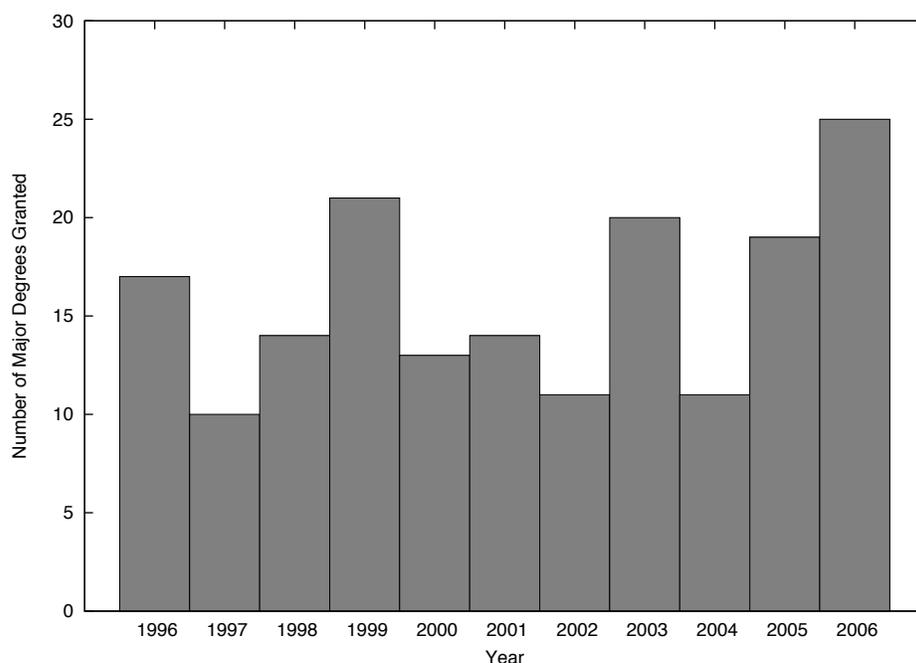


Figure 1: Math degrees granted by year.

2.6 Identifying Problems and Implementing Change

Departmental interpretation and reaction to assessment data is probably best described as an “organic” or “grassroots” approach. As professional mathematicians all of us attend conferences, read journal articles and discuss topics relevant to undergraduate mathematics education. Each year we prepare and evaluate the senior written and oral exams (see Sections 3.2 and 3.3). We all teach a variety of courses in both the lower- and upper-division. We observe each other’s teaching for the purposes of faculty evaluation. We remain in contact with alums in graduate school and industry and often receive feedback, albeit informal, from them with respect to the academic preparation they received from Whitman and our department in particular.

With all of this information in hand, as well-informed professionals, we identify gaps and deficiencies in our program and, by consensus, agree upon curricular and program changes designed to fill those gaps.

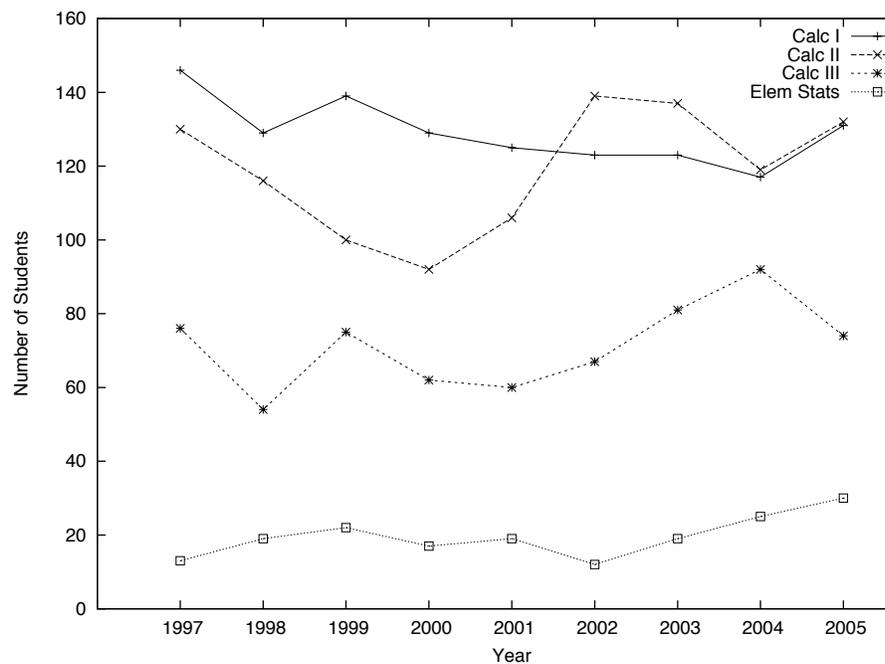


Figure 2: Calculus enrollments by year.

Sometimes problems are identified simply through collegial discussions in the hallway. At other times they are identified through the process of self-examination that comes from the development of a proposal to keep a position lost to retirement or some other attrition. Deficiencies can also be identified during a 10-year accreditation review like this.

2.7 Future Plans

We will certainly continue to offer a rigorous mathematics program within the context of a liberal arts education and adapt our teaching styles to meet this goal. To this end, we will continue to

1. experiment with teaching methods that are student-centered and require students to take a more active role in their learning;
2. involve qualified students in some form of undergraduate research projects;
3. consider changes in the comprehensive examinations with the aim of generating a more positive learning experience for the students;
4. discuss how the calculus curriculum should be structured to best serve our students, both majors and non-majors;
5. ascertain the role of computing in the teaching of mathematics;
6. investigate and possibly adopt state-of-the-art software for our courses.
7. maintain the balance of specialties in the department between pure and applied disciplines.
8. monitor how well our current course offerings meet the needs of mathematics majors and other technical majors.

3 Assessment

Student assessment within classes varies with instructor and class. However, formal program assessment is centered primarily on the comprehensive examination in mathematics which has two components: one written and one oral. The precise assessment policy is a combination of College policy and department policy. The department policy is reached by consensus and is described below.

3.1 "Local" Assessment

Every instructor employs some method of evaluation of student progress towards course goals. These methods

include but are not limited to: in-class and out-of-class exams, regular homework, longer term projects, and oral exams. Because we value detailed instructor to student feedback as part of the teaching process, our instructors avoid the use of multiple-choice exams or paid graders. As reflective teachers, we all use the results of these evaluations, as well as student evaluations of instructors, to identify problems and correct them. This “local” form of program assessment plays a large and important role in the improvement of our offerings.

3.2 Written Exam

The written component is a 4-hour examination covering the basic elements of calculus and linear algebra. These courses form the common core for all mathematics and combined mathematics majors. The purpose of this exam is to ascertain the students’ understanding of the fundamentals of college-level mathematics and their quantitative problem solving skills as well as their ability to write mathematics. The examination is written by one or two members of our department, but all members spend some time grading and/or reviewing the results. The students must exhibit a certain degree of proficiency (usually 70% or better) in order to pass this examination.

3.3 Oral Exam

The oral component of the examination has changed to address the different requirements of the pure and applied majors. To assess the common elements of each major, the members of the department developed a list of “A few things every math major should know...”. This list of roughly twenty questions is distributed to all of the majors taking oral exams. Half of the one-hour exam covers questions and topics drawn from this list.

The content of the other half of the exam depends upon the concentration of the examinee. If the examinee has a pure concentration, then the second half of the exam is a question and answer period covering the basic topics of either Math 385 (Abstract Algebra) or Math 455 (Real Analysis). The particular class to be covered is decided in advance by the student in consultation with their academic advisor.

For examinees with an applied concentration, the second half of the exam is a question and answer period covering the basic topics of both Math 244 (Differential Equations) and Math 300 (Linear Algebra).

For combined majors, the mathematics content of the oral portion is an upper division course chosen by the student’s advisor. The economics or physics oral exam content policy is determined by the respective departments.

The oral examination assesses the students’ knowledge of mathematical theory and their ability to express themselves orally. The grading on this part of the examination is more subjective, but the two or three department members administering the examination generally reach a consensus.

4 Program Assessment and Appraisal

Thus far we have provided a factual overview of the mathematics department’s goals, programs and methods of assessment. We now appraise each of these aspects.

4.1 Goals

Having just recently reassessed our departmental goals, we find the goals of the department adequate. Though we will continue to follow developments in pedagogy, technology and content, there are no current goals-related issues under consideration at the time of this writing.

All of our classes and programs contribute to the advancement of at least one of the goals listed in Section 1.2. For example, all of our courses address the problem solving goal. Many of us regularly require students to write and present orally in class specifically to address the communications goal.

The senior project course addresses all of the goals simultaneously and dovetails nicely with the calculus

laboratory to provide majors with a kind of “mathematical communications core”. Other courses are more targeted. For example, Math 260 (Introduction to Higher Mathematics), a largely content-free* (meaning that the specific course content varies by instructor) course, targets the problem solving, communications, and critical arguments goals, but perhaps does not contribute much to the depth of study goal.

More broadly, the major requirements of both the pure and applied majors meet the depth and breadth goals. In the applied major, the outside minor requirement provides the student with the additional breadth necessary to bring mathematics to bear on specific applications.

The current course offerings and major requirements are addressing all of the departmental goals.

4.2 Program Structure

At the moment, we are adequately staffed in both the number of faculty and the academic specialties. As we approach new hires, we will reassess our needs and act accordingly.

Our course offerings, as mentioned in the previous section, address the stated goals of the department with respect to the major program and our service to the rest of the College.

We will continue to refine the senior project course which has only been in place for one year. The course coordinators will play an important role in assessing this new course and making sure that it continues to meet the goals of the department. The public presentations of their work at the end of the year (another form of assessment) show that the course is doing an effective job of helping our students meet the communications goals of the department.

We have seen that students, because of the shorter calculus sequence, are able to move into a broader array of courses more quickly thereby addressing the breadth goal. We will continue to follow developments in high school calculus preparation to insure that our calculus sequence is well-coordinated with the background of entering first-year students.

The new pure and applied majors are well-structured. Five of our 2006 majors have been accepted to graduate school programs in mathematics. However, during this year’s season of graduate school acceptances it became clear that the advising language in our catalog description of the applied mathematics major should include some new advice for students planning to go on to graduate school. The current degree requirements for the applied major do not adequately prepare students for entrance into graduate programs. Several students found that many graduate programs require some real analysis. Rather than add a real analysis requirement to the major (which may not be necessary for all of our students) we will add language to the College catalog recommending that students planning on graduate study take real analysis.

Our combined majors and 3-2 engineering and computer science students appear to be well-served by the current requirements.

Math 367 (Engineering Math) was added to our course offerings not only to support the applied mathematics major, but to expand our service role to the physics department. Around 5 or 6 physics majors have enrolled in the course in each of the years it has been offered. Combined mathematics-physics and 3-2 engineering majors have also availed themselves of the new course. However, in its second year enrollments tapered off and the department may consider only offering the course every other year instead of every year as we currently do. We will continue to track enrollments and make a decision this year.

While students are never denied enrollment in upper-division courses because of over-enrollment, it is sometimes the case that lower-division courses close because of over-enrollment. Faculty members are generally very cooperative about raising class enrollment caps to accommodate students, but sometimes it is

simply not possible to admit another student because of either pedagogical reasons or the physical limitations of the classroom. Fortunately, this rarely happens. We are very sensitive to class availability issues and track enrollments and class closures very carefully for planning purposes the following year.

Overall, our methods for identifying problems and implementing change work well for our department. It is clear that our methodology relies on having members of the department that are engaged and interested in the quality of the program and who are not afraid to experiment and make changes. It is therefore of utmost importance that we continue to hire the most highly-qualified, engaged and interested people when positions open within our department.

There is room for improvement in our assessment of alums. How many go on to graduate school? How many to industry? How well-prepared do they perceive themselves to be? It is unlikely that the members of the department could undertake such assessment on their own, but there may be room for institutional support in this area.

It may also be desirable to maintain better longitudinal data on written and oral exam performance, and performance in the senior project class. These changes can probably be made internally with little additional effort by simply recognizing as a department the need to do so.

Accreditation Self-Study
Department of Physics

1. Departmental Goals

The Department's goals relate directly to its four-fold contribution to the College's mission. The first of these contributions is our major and minor programs which engage students in rigorous study of basic physical principals that graduates may use to pursue advanced degrees or professional careers in Physics, other sciences, and engineering or related subfields. Closely related to our major program is our commitment to providing student research opportunities on and off campus. Thirdly, we offer service courses to related science majors and pre-professional programs to provide students with sufficient background in physics and the problem solving strategies that physicists use, to enhance their educational experience. Finally, we provide several courses geared to serve the general education requirements of the College.

2. Description of Department

The course requirements for completing the various major and minor programs associated with the physics department are spelled out in the college catalog. The programs include a major in Physics, several combined majors: Physics/Mathematics, Physics/Astronomy, and Physics/Geology, BBMB (Biochemistry, Biophysics, and Molecular Biology) an interdisciplinary major program, and a Physics minor. The multiple combinations permit students to pursue a Physics major best suited to their educational goals. In 1998 the Department added Biophysics and an associated laboratory in conjunction with the evolution of the major that is currently denoted BBMB. In 1999 substantial changes were made to the requirements for physics and physics related majors. These changes did not require more credits but instead specified particular courses (already offered) that were found to be most commonly expected by graduate programs.

Students majoring in Physics at Whitman College possess a strong background in the general principles of physics. Our program prepares them for graduate study in a physics related fields or employment in a position requiring critical thinking, problem solving skills, and the ability to measure and analyze data. Our course requirements reflect a commitment to the core areas of knowledge in physics including five or more semesters of laboratory experience so that our students possess a strong foundation in both theoretical and experimental topics. While our department is not large, we are able to offer the standard advanced undergraduate courses (Classical Mechanics, Quantum Mechanics, Electricity and Magnetism, and Thermal Physics) in addition to standard introductory and modern physics courses. In addition, we offer a rotating menu of at least one advanced elective course each semester for our majors to explore additional areas of interest such as Optics, Computational Physics, and High Energy Physics.

The number of physics majors each year averages about twelve, though this number is obtained by counting combined majors as $\frac{1}{2}$ a person. Another number to use is the count of the seniors participating in our yearly physics comprehensive exam (essentially this counts physics/combined majors as a full person). In 2006 17 students took the exam. Note too that the Department has a contribution to the BBMB major program and none of the students who receive this major are included in that count. The number of students in our physics program compares quite favorably to other departments our size.

2.1 Curriculum

2.1.a General Studies Courses

The Department of Physics has moved to offering thematically based courses to serve the general education requirements for non-science majors at Whitman College. We currently offer three courses on a rotating schedule: Sound and Music, Energy and the Environment and How Things Work. These courses emphasize the role of basic physical principles in understanding topics such as the acoustics of musical instruments, commercial energy production and policy, and the function of common technological devices. Our goal is to utilize our student's natural curiosity about these topics to facilitate the acquisition of some basic principles of physics mixed with general notions of how scientific knowledge is acquired.

The physics department also contributes one faculty member to the Core program. Prof. Hoffman has taught this course for two years and others have expressed an interest in taking on that responsibility in the future. This commitment to the Core program provides one of the few science faculty contributions to the class. We provide a vital viewpoint to one of the signature courses at Whitman College.

2.1.b General Physics

The calculus-based, introductory physics course and associated laboratory, serves more students than any other departmental offerings. This two semester sequence serves three purposes. It is an integral part of our major program, it enrolls a substantial number of non-physics science majors who take it as a service course and finally it enrolls a small number of students utilizing it as distribution course.

At the time of the 1997 accreditation the Department was on the verge of a major overhaul of its 1st year curriculum. These changes were the outcome of internal assessments of student needs based on our analysis of student learning for our majors and surveys of other science faculty. As a result, a course was designed to meet the varied needs of the three distinct constituencies identified above. With substantial funding from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute we were able to move from a single, high enrollment, lecture based course (sometime 100 student) to a small (24 student) student centered curriculum. This curriculum has been in-place since 2000 and is continually being re-evaluated and modified.

2.1.c Upper level Physics Courses for Majors and Minors

The second year academic coursework consists of a two semester “modern physics” sequence. This year-long sequence (along with the associated laboratory 255/256) provides an entrée to the physics major program and the upper level physics electives and required courses and laboratories. Since 2004, this course has been significantly restructured to align the coursework with the associated laboratory class, to place more emphasis on the topic of waves, and to broaden the mathematical methods introduced in the class. The motivation for the change stems from a general assessment of our student performance in upper level courses along with a shift in the focus of our Junior level Quantum Mechanics course. Continued changes in the course content is anticipated as we evaluate the progress of students exposed to the new curriculum.

At the Junior/Senior level are several physics courses/laboratories that are taught every year. All courses required for the physics major are taught every year. With the exception of Thermal Physics for the Environmental studies major, all courses for combined major requirements are taught annually. Other elective courses are taught on rotating schedules but occur at least every other year on our course offerings. This ensures that most major students have an opportunity to take any of our upper level elective courses. With the tenure track hiring of two biophysicists in 2003 we have now added a Biophysics course and an associated laboratory to our upper level curriculum. In addition, through the support of a NSF grant, we have recently instituted a laboratory component to accompany its Quantum Mechanics course. This program has become a model for other departments nationwide to consider as part of their advanced laboratory offerings.

2.2 Research

Whitman College strongly encourages professional activity and is particularly pleased when this takes the form of on-campus student/faculty collaborative research. The College supports this activity with a better-than-average sabbatical scheme (faculty are eligible every fifth year) and typically budgets an adequate amount for professional travel. The College has made great strides in providing adequate and competitive start-up funding for new faculty in the Department, but it remains the individual faculty member’s responsibility to obtain outside funding to cover the great majority of the capital costs associated with their ongoing on-campus research efforts.

All members of the physics faculty currently pursue a professional research agenda. We publish in refereed journals on a regular basis, often with undergraduates as co-authors. Additionally, we present results at professional meetings and contribute work to conference proceedings. In support of the college’s educational

mission, we all provide undergraduate research opportunities for Whitman students on a regular basis. Typically four or five students work on campus during the summer with additional projects offered during the academic year as independent studies. All physics faculty have on-campus laboratories/facilities that are equipped to support their research agendas. Since 1996 more than \$400,000 from external sources has been awarded to faculty in Department in support of their research efforts.

3. Assessment

In the spring of 2006, several department meetings were convened to review our educational goals, discuss curricular needs, and to review our senior examination. Our review was a formalization of discussions that normally occur in the hallway or in offices throughout the academic year. These discussions reaffirmed in our minds that we have a sound academic program that may benefit from minor modifications but no major changes are necessary.

Student learning

Assessment of student learning throughout our course offerings is achieved primarily through assigned work and examinations. We have incorporated cooperative learning strategies in many courses to encourage collaborative interactions that are a necessary skill for these future professional scientists. Some courses provide alternative assessment tools. For example, the second semester advance laboratory class focuses on a long term project for each student resulting in a functioning experimental apparatus with the work described in a written report. In the case of the Sound and Music class, students have the option of building a functioning musical instrument as a final project to demonstrate their understanding of acoustical issues. When appropriate, we have used alternative evaluative instruments to assess student learning.

The primary evaluative instrument we use for assessing our students and our overall program is senior comprehensive examination. The exam is administered at the beginning of the spring semester during the senior year. We require students to complete a written examination covering their entire physics course work followed by an oral examination a few weeks later.

The Department has always viewed the senior examination as a tool for answering two questions: 1) does the student possess a minimum level of competence in several core areas (Newton's Laws, fundamental Modern Physics, fundamental Electricity & Magnetism, etc.) and 2) can the student utilize core ideas to address more complex scientific issues. An affirmative answer to both questions (combined with the requisite coursework and g.p.a.) is sufficient for a student to pass the examination; However, to graduate with distinction or honors a student must demonstrate mastery of the content and the ability to address complex questions.

In the past 10 years, no student has been barred from graduating on-time because of a failure on the senior examination. However, in recent years, we have asked some students to repeat parts of the exam when their work has not been at an acceptable level. Typically, these students encounter problems with the subtler points of material that was covered during introductory physics courses. Even more typically, these students misidentified very straightforward problems and attempted solutions using difficult and onerous mathematical techniques.

The Department does not believe this is indicative of fundamental problems with its introductory offerings. When questioned about their performance these students inevitably report that they put comparatively little time into reviewing the introductory material—choosing (despite Departmental warnings to the contrary) to focus on the upper-level courses. The Department has begun providing more detailed study material for its seniors and has instituted a more elaborate and formal method of meeting with seniors early in the semester before their comprehensive exams to counsel them about its expectations of them.

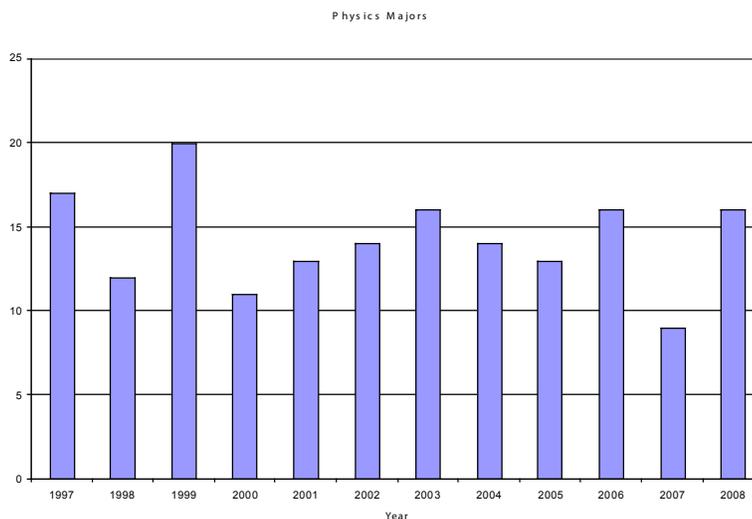
Our last accreditation document anticipated the hiring of new faculty and foresaw this augmenting what we termed our 'critical mass of young, energetic faculty.' Ten years on this new position has been filled as well as

one from a retirement. Much of the additional FTE has indeed gone towards our introductory sequence and we now teach classes of 24 to 30 instead of 70 to 80 students. We had hoped to limit enrollment in these crucial introductory courses to 24, but enrollment and scheduling pressures often force us to allow some sections to run a bit larger than desired. The entirety of the remainder of the new FTE has gone toward contributing to the College's BBMB major.

Enrollments

At the introductory level the Department's enrollments in its calculus based physics sequence (class plus laboratory) average 100 students in the fall and 75 in the spring semester. Additionally, each semester an offering for non-science majors is available. Enrollments in these vary from 15 to 40 students.

At the intermediate level (Modern Physics plus laboratory) the fall and spring semesters typically enroll 20-25 students. At the junior/senior level the courses which are required for the physics major or a physics/combined major typically enroll 12-18 students each semester, while the electives enroll 8-14 students. A notable exception to these numbers is the yearly Biophysics course and laboratory which typically enrolls 30 students.



Enrollments in courses in the recent past are consistent with the enrollments realized before the 1997 accreditation. However, an apple-to-apple comparison is impossible at the introductory level because of extensive curricular changes. In upper level physics courses and by counting numbers of majors it is fair to say that there has been a slight increase in the enrollment in the Department since the 1997.

External Departmental Review (May 2000)

In 2000, the department requested an external review of the program to address ongoing issues related to a temporary Biophysics faculty position and curricular changes both supported by a HHMI grant. The reviewers presented a series of 12 recommendations to the department and the administration.

The major institutional decision that occurred as a result of this review was the conversion of the Biophysics position to a tenure track position. {Rec. 1} After two years of failed searches the position was filled in 2003. Also in 2003 the most senior member of the Department retired and his replacement was also chosen to be someone with expertise in Biophysics. {Rec. 2} This increased the faculty size to five FTE, tenure track members. Note that, 1/3 of an FTE is committed to the College's Core General Studies Program. Direct outcomes of this hiring were the creation of the BBMB major program and establishing a permanent commitment to our newly developed introductory physics curriculum. {Rec. 6}

The hiring of a 3/4 FTE position for a laboratory technician in physics addressed several recommendations from the committee. The individual hired into this position has proven an invaluable asset in maintaining laboratory and classroom demonstration equipment. {Rec. 4} In addition, his work has freed-up faculty to devote more

time to instructional activities. {Rec. 12} Because our technician has a strong background in physics, he has also been instrumental in completing the improvements to our second year laboratory class. {Rec. 9}

Physical plant needs {Rec's. 5 and 10} were addressed during the remodeling of the Hall of Science in 2001. The instructional laboratories and the research laboratories were significantly upgraded as part of the new construction. Recommendations relating to curricular matters and communication {Rec's 7, 8 and 11} have been addressed.

The relationship between the Physics and Astronomy departments are cordial but have not been strengthened during the past six years. In part, the other major changes have overshadowed this recommendation {3}. Whitman College has maintained an independent Astronomy department for over forty years. While this structure is rare in liberal arts colleges, the departments of astronomy and physics have no desire at this time to become a unified department. We continue conversations to keep the channels of communication open so that if overlap of responsibilities or course content occur we can make the appropriate adjustments.

SPIN-UP Project Review

The Strategic Program for Innovation in Undergraduate Physics (SPIN-UP) was initiated to identify the strengths of Undergraduate Physics programs that were deemed to be thriving in the 1990's. An executive summary of the SPIN-UP report is included as an appendix available in the Accreditation Exhibit Room. The Whitman College physics department was selected for review by this committee. Our above average number of majors (12 per year) was an indicator that we were maintaining a strong departmental program at a time when many physics departments around the country were experiencing a decline in Physics majors. The program case study presents many strengths of our program including: the combined majors that accommodate the diverse and interdisciplinary interests of students, small sized introductory physics classes, and a deeply committed faculty. This report emphasizes the strength of our physics program as being exemplary on a national scale for liberal arts colleges.

4. Analysis and Projections

The departmental goals were determined to be consistent with a strong major program focusing on providing students with a solid foundation in physics. Our objectives are consistent with the mission of Whitman College. We provide opportunities for all members of the student body to explore a level of physics appropriate for their learning objectives. We see our department as a vital part of the overall academic program at Whitman College.

The general studies courses offered by the physics department meet the learning objectives we devised for these classes. The courses draw modest to large enrollments indicating student interest in the thematically based courses. Student evaluations of the courses reflect general satisfaction with the content and scope of the courses. One issue we plan to encourage at the division level is a discussion about the educational content of all distribution courses in the area of science. A better understanding of the scientific ideas we want all graduates of Whitman to know would inform possible improvements in course content and curriculum.

We strongly support the general studies program through our commitment to the Core studies program. That said, we do encounter a difficulty in offering sufficient upper level elective courses for our majors. Still, our plan is to offer upper-level 'special topics' elective on a rotating basis that reflect the interests and expertise of all of our faculty. Most recently Professor Moore taught a 400-level seminar on Particle Physics which had never been offered before at Whitman.

The General Physics course is now in its seventh year of implementation. With the addition of two new tenure track faculty we need to review the course objectives and content to accommodate the new perspectives in our faculty. These discussions have been initiated and will continue throughout the spring of 2007. We envision a wide ranging discussion that will help us maintain a high level of intellectual achievement in this course.

The upper level physics program has experienced a few significant change in the past ten years. With a permanent biophysicist on our faculty, we have added a Biophysics courses and an associated lab course to our curriculum. In addition, we have added an innovative Quantum Mechanics laboratory course. While the other offerings to our upper-level curriculum have not changed, the specific content of the courses has changed.

We are confident that our senior examination effectively assesses student learning. We utilize the exam results to identify strengths and weaknesses in our curriculum. Currently we are increasing our expectations for student achievement on the exams. Concomitant with the increasing expectations of our graduates, we have refocused our efforts to emphasize fundamental principles throughout our curriculum.

We are pleased with the current productivity of our research programs. These programs emphasize direct student involvement with planning, designing, and implementing experimental or theoretical research. These experiences are vital for young scientists making decisions about graduate level study. Where possible we hope to enhance the educational program through classroom utilization of research equipment and results.

The final reports from the external review of our department and the SPIN-UP committee both endorsed of our current program. Our program is consistent with national expectations. Indeed, it serves as a model for other programs seeking ways to strengthen their program. Our strong reputation will continue to serve our students well as they seek admission to the top graduate programs or pursue other career interests.

