As a result of the third cycle of DePaul University's Academic Program Review Process (Cycle 3), the participants in the process enter into the following agreements. The participants understand that this document will be available to be made public once all the signatures are in place.

**Actions agreed upon for the coming academic year**

1. **Curriculum**
   
   a. Possible changes in undergraduate curriculum. The department will have a year-long series of discussions at faculty meetings and retreats during 2001-2002 on ways to strengthen the undergraduate curriculum. The department will encourage all faculty to get involved in this discussion to consider important issues regarding breadth and depth of the curriculum. The department will emphasize pedagogical and curricular perspectives when discussing ways to improve the curriculum, although it may consider administrative/organizational concerns as well. The department’s goal is to have decided upon a direction for curriculum revision by the end of the 2001-2002 academic year.

   b. As part of the formal discussions about ways to strengthen the undergraduate curriculum, the department will also have informal discussions next year about how to enhance multicultural perspectives within the curriculum. The goal is to get faculty and students talking more regularly about the issue of diversity, to raise awareness and explore ideas, and to broaden thinking as the department examines a rather traditional curriculum. There are currently courses devoted to multicultural topics, but the department wants to expand the issue beyond specific courses. The dean noted that the department has a strong record of incorporating courses with a multicultural emphasis into its curriculum and should be recognized for its commitment to this issue.

2. **Assessment**
   
   a. The department has decided to implement a two-part strategy to assess student learning in the major. The first part will be for faculty to read sample papers in the entry English courses and the English Capstone courses, score them against a faculty-developed rubric, and determine whether students achieve the goals of the program between the early and senior years. The reading/scoring will take place in alternate years beginning in 2001. The second part of the strategy will be to have students in capstone courses take the ETS Major Field test in English, beginning with a pilot group at the end of 2001-2002 academic year. The ETS Major Field test matches the department’s curricular emphases on historical periods and criticism/interpretation and will allow the department to compare its students’ performances to national benchmarks.

   b. The department will report to the College what it has learned from these assessment efforts. Preliminary results of the assessment project will be considered in the coming year’s discussions of the curriculum.

3. **Advising**
   
   a. There has been general agreement among the faculty of the need to improve advising and make advising a more visible and prominent feature of the English department. As part of its commitment to advising, in the coming year the department will obtain and maintain better information to support
advising and student decision making, including creating a brochure about the curriculum, and a
to starting a resource center with materials about DePaul programs, scholarship opportunities, and career
options for English and Writing majors. The department requested funding from the College for these
resources (see #4 below) and will work next year to develop these materials.

b. The department had also proposed the appointment of a full-time Advising Coordinator, who would
hold daily office hours to consult with undergraduate English majors; maintain materials in a resource
center for students, assist in the administrative/clerical duties of student record keeping, consult with
faculty on advising issues, assign undergraduate majors to faculty advisors, and other related duties.
The dean noted that the case for this position was not strong based on the numbers of majors in relation
to faculty, and based on the limited number of full-time staff positions. Instead, the dean suggested that
the department consider other ways to meet these advising needs, such as providing course release time
for faculty in exchange for a shared load of the graduate advising. The dean recommended that the
department examine which advising functions are crucial and develop other proposals for addressing
components of the current problems with advising.

4. Tracking Alumni.

The department wishes to keep in touch with its alumni but has limited time and resources to maintain
records and contact. It had proposed that the Advising Coordinator position be responsible also for
maintaining alumni records and contacts. With the dean’s suggestion that the department pursue other
alternatives to this staff position, the department requests assistance from the university/Academic
Affairs on this issue. The EVP agreed that this is something the university should be doing and will
work to improve efforts in this direction. Academic Affairs will report back to the APRC in one year
on the status of the university’s efforts to track and maintain contact with alumni.

5. Resources

a. The department requested one thousand dollars to develop and print a brochure for incoming
English majors. The dean approved the request.

b. The department requested five hundred dollars per year to create and maintain a resource center,
to include information about various DePaul programs, scholarship programs, and options for employment
and graduate school. The dean agreed to this commitment of funds.

c. The department requested funding for a full-time staff for the proposed Advising and Alumni
Coordinator position. The dean did not agree to this resource request but agreed to consider other
proposals for alternative approaches to improving advising.

Issues on which there is joint commitment to continue working

1. Faculty

a. Diversity. The department is committed to improving the diversity among its faculty. Out of the
department’s 34 full-time faculty, 5 are faculty of color. The last five hires to tenure-line positions have
all been women and two of them have been women of color. As the department hires new faculty, it
will continue to seek candidates who mirror the great diversity of DePaul’s student body and
surrounding community. The department notes that integrating multiculturalism into the curriculum
may also broaden the appeal of the department to faculty with traditionally underrepresented
ethnic/cultural backgrounds and interests.

b. Newly-hired faculty. The department will seek the best use of faculty hired within the last ten years
to broaden the undergraduate curriculum and strengthen the department. The department is considering
ways to utilize the talents of the faculty recently hired in the Graduate writing program, such as having them teach in the undergraduate program, or similar ways to increase contact with English majors. Also, hiring new faculty with multicultural interests will help bring diversity to the curriculum.

2. Student data

Enrollments have grown in the English department, while the numbers of English majors has remained relatively constant. The dean notes that the percentage increase in course enrollments (of both majors and non-majors who enroll in courses taught by the English department) will guide resource decisions. The department notes that with the advent of the PeopleSoft registration system, there are discrepancies in student major and enrollment counts between the department’s records and the universities. The University is committed to working on improving PeopleSoft so that departments have accurate counts of students and can receive information from the system in a timely manner (see “University Commitments” below).

University-level Issues and Commitments

During Cycle 3, the unit program review self-studies raised several issues that have important university-wide implications. In subsequent conversations about these major issues, the units, the deans, the Academic Program Review Committee members, and the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs all have recognized the need for university-level coordination in the following areas: a) developing appropriate staffing models to support growth; b) assisting units in the transition to the PeopleSoft student administrative system and in getting the maximum benefits from it, such as identifying and counting double majors, enforcing prerequisites, and securing better information and support for student advising; c) providing research assistance to units through university-level research offices; d) improving support for advising, especially in light of PeopleSoft; e) facilitating cross-college collaboration within DePaul with respect to new programs of study. In order to meet these commitments, the University agrees to give high priority to fully implementing those aspects of PeopleSoft that deal with academic support and advising, and to provide for college and departmental faculty and/or staff the information and/or training necessary for colleges and departments to take full advantage of those PeopleSoft functions. To follow up on these common issues and determine the appropriate courses of action needed to address them at the university and unit level, the Academic Program Review Committee and the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs agree to do the following:

1. The Academic Program Review Committee agrees to prepare a summary report on Cycle 3 to the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs which discusses these and other issues that have important connections to other university-wide initiatives. That report will be made public, along with the Memoranda of Agreement.

2. The Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs agrees to direct the appropriate university-level offices to work with the units and their deans to determine how to effectively address these issues.

3. The Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs will require a progress report in June of 2002 from the appropriate university offices that will be shared with the Academic Program Review Committee.

Acknowledgements

The APRC chair and the APR subcommittee thank the unit’s review committee for its work in this cycle. The review committee has done a thorough job on the self-study; the APRC has shared the self-study report with others participating in the process as an example of a well-executed review. The APRC also
appreciates that the English department has continually worked to involve the English Department faculty in the review process from identifying major issues to approving the final self-study document. The EVP and the Dean also thank those involved in APR for making this process work. It is an important part of the university’s monitoring and maintaining academic quality.

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A hard copy of this document was signed by:

Chair of the Unit Review Committee
Department Chair/Program Director
Chair of APRC Subcommittee
Chair ARPC
Dean of the College
Associate V.P. for Academic Affairs
Executive V.P. for Academic Affairs

*The hard copy with signatures is on file in the Office of the Associate V.P. for Academic Affairs and is available upon request.*