

English Undergraduate Minor Proposal: Literature

Approved June 14, 2007

Executive Summary

Literature Minor / 18 credits

Literature courses offer students the opportunity to develop critical reading and writing skills, while exposing them to a wide range of important literary periods, genres, and authors. A primary objective of the Literature minor is to teach students to read, understand, and interpret literature, and to demonstrate their understanding of literary works and related ideas in writing. Also, Literature minors will learn to apply the tools of literary criticism and to be familiar with the major critical approaches to literature. This minor will make the study and critique of literature available to the non-English major, to students who have a passion for reading and for writing about and discussing literature but who choose not to major in English.

The Literature minor would be highly attractive and useful to students in a variety of disciplines, as it would help to develop their critical thinking and writing skills, historical and cultural awareness, and appreciation of the diversity of written expression over the ages. Students have expressed strong interest in a minor to English faculty. In fact, many faculty regularly have students in their classes who have a strong interest in English, and who have indicated they would minor in English if such an option were available.

The curriculum for the Literature minor is based on existing English courses and does not require additional resources or monies to start-up or maintain.

Description of the Literature Minor

The Literature minor is a minimum 18 credit-hour (6 course) program designed to provide students with a critical understanding of a range of literary periods, genres, authors, and literary theory. This minor is relevant to any students who have an interest in reading, writing about, and discussing literature from earlier periods through the present time. The Literature minor would be highly attractive and useful to students in a variety of disciplines, as it would help to develop their critical thinking and writing skills, historical and cultural awareness, and appreciation of the diversity of written expression over the ages.

In order to declare and successfully complete the Literature minor, students should note the following:

1. A student must declare a major before declaring a Literature minor.
2. A student should declare a Literature minor by the first semester of his or her junior year. A Literature minor cannot be added after graduation.
3. A minimum of 18 credits is required for the Literature minor.
4. The Literature minor will be certified at the same time that the student's major(s) is certified for graduation.
5. Prior to graduation, students in the Literature minor program must submit a portfolio that includes at least three substantial critical papers representing at least two genres. Each paper shall include the writing prompt as well as comments by the instructor. Writing portfolios shall also include a self-assessment by the student, between 250-500 words long, that indicates the extent to which he or she can demonstrate the learning outcomes.
6. Students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 in Literature minor courses in order for the minor to be posted on the official transcript at the time of graduation.
7. A minor will not be awarded if the student is earning or has already earned a Bachelor's degree with English as the major concentration.
8. At most, six (6) credit hours within the Literature minor may be counted towards both the major and the minor.
9. At least 12 credits (or 4 courses) of the courses required for the minor must be taken at UDM unless the courses are taken as part of a consortium agreement.
10. Where indicated for certain courses in the curriculum (see below) students must complete prerequisite courses before taking the specified course in the Literature minor.
11. No course for the Literature minor can taken on a pass/fail basis.
12. None of the courses required for the Literature minor may be taken as directed studies or as independent studies.
13. A minimum of nine (9) credit hours must come from courses at the 300- or 400-levels.

14. Each student who selects an English minor in Literature will be assigned a faculty advisor from the English Department.
15. The English Department reserves the right to review and to modify the curriculum for the Literature minor through the same procedures that it uses to review and to modify the English major.

Literature Minor Curriculum

I. One of the following (3 credits). Successful completion of one of the classes from this category is a pre-requisite for further coursework in the minor.

ENL 235: Study of Fiction	3 cr
ENL 245: Study of Poetry	3 cr
ENL 265: Study of Drama	3 cr

II. One of the following (3 credits):

ENL 236: Diversity Literature	3 cr
ENL 285: African-American Literature	3 cr

III. Three of the following (9 credits):

ENL 311: American Literature to 1865	3 cr
ENL 312: American Literature 1865 to 1920	3 cr
ENL 320: Medieval Literature	3 cr
ENL 321: Renaissance Literature	3 cr
ENL 322: English Literature of the 18 th Cent.	3 cr
ENL 323: English Literature of the 19 th Cent.	3 cr
ENL 334: Transatlantic Modernisms	3 cr
ENL 335: Post-1945 Literature	3 cr

IV. One of the following (3 credits):

ENL 460: Topics in Literary History	3 cr
ENL 461: Topics in Literature and Science	3 cr
ENL 462: Topics in Genre	3 cr
ENL 463: Topics in Authorial Studies	3 cr
ENL 464: Topics in Race	3 cr

ENL 465: Topics in Gender	3 cr
ENL 466: Topics in Class	3 cr
ENL 467: Topics in Cultural Studies	3 cr
ENL 468: Topics in World Literature	3 cr
ENL 469: Topics in Literature and Religion	3 cr
Total number of credits:	18cr

Delivery Format for Literature Minor Courses

All courses in the proposed Literature minor curriculum will be delivered in the same manner as they are right now. Courses will be offered during the day and evening on weekdays and on Saturdays. Courses may involve the use of lectures and internet.

How the Literature Minor Courses Demonstrate Integrity and Academic Merit

The English Department discussed this proposal at several meetings, making sure that the proposed minors are of a standard quality consistent with the Academic Standards for Minors approved on 7 September 2006.

Impact of Proposed Literature Minor on other Departments

Because the proposed Literature minor is based on existing courses, the proposed program is not expected to have any significant effect on enrollment or student retention in other departments. The Literature minor would be highly attractive and useful to students in a variety of disciplines, as it would help to develop their critical thinking and writing skills, historical and cultural awareness, and appreciation of the diversity of written expression over the ages.

The Literature Minor and the UDM Mission

The Department of English has long been central to facilitating the University's mission of integrating the intellectual, spiritual, ethical, and social development of our students. With its emphasis on critical thinking, the Department prepares students to go out into the world with a deeper understanding of the complexity and diversity of human expression. This emphasis also is consistent with the College of Liberal Arts and Education's mission to cultivate intellectual versatility and a moral foundation so that students act with understanding, integrity, and compassion in their personal and professional lives.

Program Objective and Learning Outcomes

The Literature minor is designed to increase the breadth of education non-English majors. A primary objective of the Literature minor is to teach students to read, understand, and interpret literature competently, and to demonstrate their understanding of literary works

and related ideas in writing. In addition, students in this minor are expected to apply the tools of literary criticism and to be familiar with the major critical approaches to literature.

Assessment of Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes for the Literature minor will be assessed in a number of ways, including the following:

- a. **Writing Portfolios:** For the Literature minor, students submit a portfolio that includes at least three substantial critical papers representing at least two genres. Each paper shall include the writing prompt as well as comments by the instructor. Writing portfolios shall also include a self-assessment by the student, between 250-500 words long, that indicates the extent to which he or she can demonstrate the learning outcomes.
- b. **Individual Papers/Projects:** The English Department will dedicate meetings in the Fall and Winter of each academic year to discuss in detail the extent to which students, based on their writing performance in our classes, are meeting the learning objectives for the Literature minor.
- c. **Course Evaluations:** The English Department Chair will review faculty evaluations each term and meet with faculty, if necessary, to discuss ways to improve content delivery.

As a result of our assessment of learning outcomes through the above methods, the English Department will meet on a regular basis to review, discuss, and if necessary implement any changes deemed necessary, in accordance with the process used to change the English major.

Use of University Resources

The proposed Literature minor not require the use of any University resources above and beyond what is currently needed to run existing English courses.