Resolution # 05
2009-2010
College Senate

New Resolution:
Supersedes Res #: __________

TO: Dr. John R. Halstead, College President
FROM: The College Senate: November 30, 2009
RE: I. Formal Resolution (Act of Determination)
II. Recommendation (Urging the Fitness of)
III. Other, For Your Information (Notice, Request, Report, etc.)

SUBJ: English M. A. Requirement Changes, Literature Track (routing #11 09-10 GC)
Signed: ________________ Date: 12/09/09
(Steven Lewis, 2009-10 College Senate President)

Please fill out the bottom portion and follow the distribution instructions at the end of this page.

TO: Steven Lewis, The College Senate President
FROM: John R. Halstead, College President
RE: 1. Decision and Action Taken on Formal Resolution (circle choice)
c.o. Accepted - Implementation Effective Date: Fall 2010
b. Deferred for discussion with the Faculty Senate on ___/___/___
c. Unacceptable for the reasons contained in the attached explanation

II. III. Response to Recommendation or Other/1/Y1
a. Received and acknowledged ___/___/___
b. Comment: _______________________________________________________________________

Signed: __________________ Date: 12/14/09
(Dr. John R. Halstead, President, The College at Brockport)

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ENCLOSED IS A PROPOSAL WITH TWO MA REQUIREMENTS CHANGES FOR ENGLISH MA, LITERATURE TRACK EFFECTIVE FALL 2010:

1) Replace ENL 601 Bibliography with ENL 690 Advanced Writing in the Discipline
2) Replace ENL 698 Thesis with ENL 697 Advanced Project in Literature

J. Roger Kurtz
Name

English
Department

X5823
Phone

rkurtz@brockport.edu
Email

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NOTES:
Revised October 23, 2009

TO: Faculty Senate
FROM: J. Roger Kurtz, Department of English

RE: Changes to English MA Requirements, Literature Track

A proposal for two changes to the MA requirements in English, for the Literature Track only, effective Fall 2010:

1) Replace ENL 601 Bibliography with ENL 690 Advanced Writing in the Discipline

   a) Comparison of old program to new:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existing Program</th>
<th>Proposed Changes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Literature Track</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ENL 601 Bibliography</td>
<td>3 One course in grammar, linguistics, sociolinguistics, history of language, or English lit before 1500</td>
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<tr>
<td>12-17 Electives</td>
<td>3 ENL 690 Advanced Writing in the Discipline*</td>
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<tr>
<td>1-6 ENL 698 Thesis</td>
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<td><strong>36 TOTAL CREDITS</strong></td>
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*Prerequisites: 12 hours of graduate credit

**Prerequisites: B- in ENL 690 and GPA of 3.0
b) Rationale -- Mission, market and quality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Old – ENL 601 Bibliography</th>
<th>New – ENL 690 Advanced Writing in the Discipline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taken at start of MA program (no pre-requisites)</td>
<td>Taken at end of MA program, as capstone course (12 graduate credit hours required)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepares students for graduate-level coursework</td>
<td>Prepares students for final writing project in ENL 697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No minimum grade requirement</td>
<td>Minimum grade of B- required for continuing to ENL 697</td>
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In recent years it has become increasingly clear that ENL 601 does not meet the needs of our graduate students as well as we would hope. The course was originally envisioned as one that all graduate students would take at the start of their program, and that it would prepared them for the type of writing they would encounter in graduate school—especially their final project, the thesis.

That goal has not always worked out in a satisfactory manner. Students do not necessarily take the course when they should, and even if they do the time that passes between the course and the final project (the thesis) is often long enough that the benefits are lost. If students took the course closer to the time of their final writing project, it would be more beneficial to them.

By replacing 601 with 690, the main goal is to increase students’ opportunities for success in completing their final project, whether it is the thesis (from the old curriculum) or a final writing assignment (new proposal, below). By putting this course at the end of the program, it allows students to more effectively prepare for their final project, which should increase their success rate.

This change supports our graduate program’s mission of offering training in the effective study and interpretation of literature. We believe it will allow a higher percentage of students successfully complete the MA program, even as it enhances the quality of their experience and their work.

c) Description of new course

**ENL 690: Advanced Writing In the Discipline (3 credit hours).** *To be taken upon completion of 12 graduate credit hours. A grade of “B-” or higher is required to proceed to ENL 697: Advanced Project in Literature.*

“Advanced Writing in the Discipline” is the capstone course for the English MA degree with a concentration in Literature. Its purpose is twofold: (1) to prepare students for the final project, a 30-35 page scholarly essay that contributes substantially to current discussions within the student’s chosen field; (2) to acquaint students with the practices and conventions of advanced academic writing (such as peer review and revision). Below is a description of how the course would work.

- Each student will be required once during the semester to present the class and the instructor with an essay submitted in a prior course at least 15 pages in length that the student would like to rework for the Advanced Project in Literature. The essay will be discussed during class in a workshop: students will be required to offer commentary (perhaps in writing) and suggestions for revision, and the instructor will offer recommendations as well while guiding the review process.

- On the day in which the student’s work is considered by the class, the student may be required to begin the discussion of the paper with a 20-minute conference-style presentation. The student should come to class prepared to answer questions about the submitted essay and to receive recommendations.
Time permitting, instructors should supplement the activities outlined above with assignments that acquaint students with the elements of advanced academic writing, such as book reviews and analytical responses to assigned readings. Faculty in the department may be invited to speak to the class about their own published work.

The culminating project in ENL 690 will be an annotated bibliography developed in response to the suggestions of other students and the instructor. This annotated bibliography, along with a brief (2-3 paragraph) summary of the project in abstract form, will be given to the student’s committee for review in the following semester along with the essay. The annotated bibliography and essay will constitute the proposal for the culminating project.

d) Staffing

There is no need for additional staff with this proposal.

e) Academic administration commentary

This relatively minor adjustment in the MA program has been approved by the English department graduate committee, by the department as a whole, and by the English department chairperson. It is judged that review by the Dean of the School and the Graduate Dean is not necessary.

f) Resources, facilities and non-teaching staff needed

No change is required in this area.

g) Cooperating departments

Students pursuing a Masters in Education with a concentration in English will no longer have ENL 601 as a Liberal Arts elective, but will have plenty of other and in fact more appropriate courses to choose from, as in the past (see 2007-2009 Graduate Studies Catalog, p. 114).

2) Replace ENL 698 Thesis with ENL 697 Advanced Project in Literature

a) Comparison of old program to new:

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<td>1-6 credits</td>
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<tr>
<td>Typically 50-70 pages</td>
<td>Typically 30-35 pages</td>
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<tr>
<td>No preparatory work required</td>
<td>Builds on writing in ENL 690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May last multiple semesters</td>
<td>One semester only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director plus two readers</td>
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For a number of years, the English MA program has used the writing of a thesis as the sole option for a student’s final project in the program. Discipline-wide, this is only one of a number of models that are and have been used, here and elsewhere. We propose to replace the thesis requirement with a more flexible advanced writing assignment.

By changing from a thesis to an “advanced project,” we believe that we will contribute to the flexibility of each student’s program, allowing for a greater chance of success for a larger number of our students. While a thesis serves well those students who are planning to pursue doctoral study, most of our students do not fall in this category. Students may still write a very long project, but for the majority of our students, particularly those who are pursuing an MA in order to receive permanent certification as teachers, the advanced project option is a superior choice because of the flexibility and nature of the project.

This change increases our flexibility, but we do not believe it will decrease the quality of our MA. At present, most students in our program use 6 credits for their thesis. Decreasing the length and scope of the final project (from the 50-70 page range to the 30-35 page range) will be made up for by the fact that this 3-credit project will require students to take an additional 3-credit class. Furthermore, students will be prepared for the writing of this project by the work they have completed in ENL 690 (see first proposal, above).

This change applies only to those MA students in our Literature track. Students in our other track, Creative Writing, will continue to write the thesis, which usually takes the form of a creative project with a critical introduction. We believe this model continues to be most appropriate for graduate students in Creative Writing.

This change supports our graduate program’s mission of offering training in the effective study and interpretation of literature. We believe it will allow a higher percentage of students successfully complete the MA program, even as it enhances the quality of their experience and their work.

c) Description of new course

**ENL 697: Advanced Project in Literature (3 credits). Available only to students who have earned at least a grade of “B-” in “Advanced Writing in the Discipline” and have a GPA of 3.0 or higher in graduate coursework.**

- The student will rewrite the paper presented in “Advanced Writing in the Discipline” under the supervision of a two-person committee. Both the initial and final versions of the paper must be submitted in a portfolio to the committee upon completion of the project. Minimum length for the final paper is 30-35 pages (notes included).

- The student and the director will agree on a schedule for work during the semester in which ENL 697 is to be taken. A copy of this schedule, signed by the student and the director, will be kept on file.
• The Advanced Project will meet the following minimum standards: 1) It will demonstrate understanding of the historical and/or theoretical debates relevant to the topic. 2) It will demonstrate mastery of the critical tradition relevant to the primary texts or texts of the study. 3) It will provide a thorough analysis of the primary text or texts. 4) It will meet professional standards of structural clarity and in the quality of its prose. 5) It will contribute new knowledge to an existing scholarly discussion.

• The committee will arrange to meet with the student for a defense of the project once it has been deemed acceptable by the director of the committee, and both members will sign a document verifying that the project is acceptable after the defense. The Graduate Coordinator will not sign the student’s Graduation Data Card or Revised Plan of Study (the final paperwork necessary for graduation) until these signatures have been collected.

• After the defense, the director will determine a grade for the project.

d) Staffing

There is no need for additional staff with this proposal.

e) Academic administration commentary

This relatively minor adjustment in the MA program has been approved by the English department graduate committee, by the department as a whole, and by the English department chairperson. It is judged that review by the Dean of the School and the Graduate Dean is not necessary.

f) Resources, facilities and non-teaching staff needed

No change is required in this area.

g) Cooperating departments

No other departments are affected, outside of English.