

RATIONALE FOR NEW ENGLISH CURRICULUM – FALL 2020

A central goal in revising our curriculum is to make the English Department an inclusive literary home for our Bronx-based students, celebrating the intellectual, political, and artistic brilliance of the people of color who make up the majority of our college, this continent, and the world. Our first step toward this goal was a new Mission Statement that articulates what it means to teach English studies within a Hispanic Serving Institution in the Bronx:

We are a vibrant department of readers, writers, scholars, critics, editors, digital humanists and engaged community members. As part of a Hispanic Serving Institution situated among the rich cultural, racial, and linguistic diversity of The Bronx and surrounding areas, the English Department engages with literatures and cultural material past and present, local and global. Through innovative teaching and inventive scholarship, we practice critical analysis, creative expression, and skills for understanding and contributing to a wide range of communities. Each of our three tracks for the major -- Literature, Creative Writing, and Professional Writing -- prepares students with the skills and knowledge necessary for the many professions available to English majors.

Our revised curriculum stresses engagement with the cultural, racial, and linguistic diversity that our students bring to their study of English literature. Whether we are teaching texts from the distant past or the contemporary moment, our revised curriculum places greater focus on English as a discipline through which our students can come to terms with the social, racial, and linguistic inequities and exclusions that often accompany works of great aesthetic beauty and cultural authority. At the same time, through a range of new and revised courses such as Latinx Literature, Indigenous Literature, Early Women Writers, and LGBTQ+ Literature, our students can now understand how strategies of self-representation, community building, and resistance to dominant ideologies gives voice to those who have been excluded from or reductively represented within certain traditions and literatures.