

Internal Academic Review

Department: English

Academic Year: 2022-23 (July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023)

The English department has cultivated a rich legacy characterized by a lineage of distinguished alumni and significant scholarly contributions. Since its establishment in 1948, the department has consistently been at the forefront of critical thinking and research, both through individual endeavors and innovative teaching practices. This longstanding commitment to excellence has resulted in a substantial impact on the academic landscape, contributing to the intellectual development and advancement of knowledge within the field.

STRENGTHS

- Our department's foremost asset lies in the diversity of our teaching faculty, strategically positioned to align with the growing multiculturalism within our student body. Our faculty members represent a broad spectrum of vernacular cultures, including Bangla, Bhojpuri, Urdu, Hindi, Rongmei, Malayalam, and, of course, English. Additionally, a considerable number of faculty members are actively engaged in writing, translating, and publishing works in these diverse languages.
- This commitment to linguistic diversity facilitates a highly interdisciplinary approach within our department. Faculty members contribute to various research areas such as oral narratives, children's literature, Dalit literatures, caste studies, gender studies, and other related fields. This diversity in expertise allows us to offer a comprehensive educational experience, fostering an environment where students can explore a wide range of subjects and perspectives.
- The department's commitment to academic excellence and cultural enrichment during the Academic Year 2022-2023 is exemplified by the successful organization of key events.
 - **Canto International Poetry Festival (15 March 2023):**
 - On March 15, 2023, the department orchestrated the Canto International Poetry Festival, a pivotal occasion in our academic calendar. This event featured an interactive session with Prof. Alison James from the University of Chicago, where students and faculty actively engaged in discussions on creative writing, poetry, and translation. The festival provided a platform for valuable insights into these artistic forms.'
 - **LitFest 2023:**
 - LitFest 2023, a two-day extravaganza, further underscored the department's dedication to academic and cultural enrichment. Alongside a delectable

assortment of home-cooked meals prepared by English department students, the festival hosted several engaging events and competitions.

- **Paper Presentation Competition on the 'Carnavalesque':**
- A significant highlight was the Paper Presentation Competition on the theme of the 'Carnavalesque.' Both undergraduate and postgraduate students submitted and presented papers exploring the concept as developed by Mikhail Bakhtin through his analysis of Rabelais' work, 'Gargantua and Pantagruel.' The papers delved into the negation and inversion of societal norms, with esteemed faculty members Prof. Deepika Tandon, Prof. Kusuma K. Subha, Prof. Sakshi Dogra, and Prof. Sakshi Sharma serving as judges.

- **Speaker Sessions:**
 - *Concept of the Indeterminate in the Renaissance (Prof. Shirshendu Chakrabarti):*
 - Prof. Shirshendu Chakrabarti led a captivating speaker session providing attendees with insightful perspectives on the Renaissance. The discussion focused on the historical shift from a theocentric to an anthropocentric worldview during this transformative period in European history.
 - *Many Routes to Europe's Renaissance (Prof. Arjun Ghosh):*
 - Another engaging speaker session, led by Prof. Arjun Ghosh, critiqued the conventional portrayal of the Renaissance for emphasizing European culture while sidelining the Orient. Attendees actively participated in discussions exploring the neglected history and diverse developments beyond the European context.

In conclusion, these events underscore the department's unwavering commitment to fostering academic discourse, nurturing critical thinking, and encouraging cultural exploration among both students and faculty. LitFest 2023's diverse array of topics reflects the department's dedication to interdisciplinary approaches and the promotion of a rich intellectual environment.

Problem Areas and How we have tried to deal with it:

Throughout the Academic Year 2022-2023, the department has been attentive to the complex dynamics surrounding student anxiety, particularly in the context of rapidly evolving and turbulent employment opportunities. Despite the provision of counseling and mentorship sessions, it has become evident that students continue to grapple with heightened anxiety regarding their future career prospects.

Nature of Student Anxiety:

The anxiety observed among students is multifaceted and rooted in the swiftly changing landscape of employment opportunities. Factors such as the pace of technological advancements, market uncertainties, and the evolving job market contribute to a sense of apprehension among students about their professional trajectories. These concerns have been identified as a significant area requiring nuanced attention and targeted support.

Supportive Measures Implemented:

To address these concerns comprehensively, the department has implemented ongoing sessions with successful alumni. These sessions are designed not only to provide practical insights into navigating the professional realm but also to serve as a source of inspiration and reassurance. By connecting current students with alumni who have successfully navigated similar challenges, the department aims to impart valuable perspectives and instill a sense of confidence in the face of uncertain career trajectories.

Counseling and Mentorship:

Recognizing the need for personalized support, counseling, and mentorship sessions continue to be integral components of the department's efforts. Trained professionals are available to guide students through their academic journeys, offering assistance not only in academic matters but also in addressing the emotional and psychological aspects associated with career-related anxiety.

Continuous Evaluation and Adaptation:

The department remains committed to a process of continuous evaluation and adaptation in response to the evolving needs of the student body. Regular assessments are conducted to gauge the effectiveness of support initiatives, allowing for timely adjustments and enhancements. This commitment reflects the department's proactive approach to student well-being and success.

Future Considerations:

Looking ahead, the department will continue to explore innovative strategies to further alleviate student anxiety and enhance overall well-being. Collaboration with industry experts, the integration of skill-building workshops, and the expansion of mentorship networks are among the potential avenues under consideration. By fostering an environment that prioritizes holistic student development, the department aims to equip students not only academically but also

emotionally and professionally for the challenges they may encounter beyond the university setting.

In conclusion, the department's response to student anxiety underscores its commitment to nurturing a supportive and empowering academic environment. Through a combination of counseling, mentorship, and alumni engagement, the department endeavors to guide students towards a future marked by resilience, confidence, and success.

Enhancing Alumni Engagement:

The department is strategically focused on fortifying its ties with the Miranda House Archiving Project, aiming to cultivate a more robust and interactive relationship with its esteemed alumni. The envisioned initiatives encompass proactively seeking heightened endowments and orchestrating specialized mentoring sessions. These efforts are geared towards providing valuable guidance to English graduates as they navigate diverse career paths, fostering a stronger sense of community and support within the alumni network.

Diversification through Multidisciplinary Courses:

In alignment with the tenets of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2022, the department is poised to introduce an array of innovative courses catering to the evolving educational landscape. Embracing a multidisciplinary approach, these courses include offerings in Digital Filmmaking, Environment and Literatures, and Creative Writing. This strategic diversification aims not only to meet the changing educational needs of students within Miranda House but also to extend these enriching opportunities to a broader audience. By staying abreast of contemporary educational trends, the department seeks to provide a dynamic and forward-thinking academic experience.