Abstract:

This grant provided funds to support revision of the English major curriculum so that it more fully engages current trends in the discipline while promoting student engagement, retention and progress to graduation. Specifically, funds were used to compensate Dr. Barbara Liu for time spent locating a qualified and appropriate consultant to facilitate the revision process, as well as collecting, collating, and contextualizing preliminary self-study materials provided to that consultant. Funds also compensated the consultant for time spent examining those materials and preparing to work with our faculty during a curriculum revision workshop/retreat (to be held during the 2011-2012 academic year).
Introduction:

Over the last two years, the Department of English has been discussing the need for a revision of the English major curriculum so that it more fully engages current trends in the discipline and capitalizes on our faculty's expertise and abilities, while promoting student engagement, retention and progress to graduation. These discussions included research into the English major curricula of other universities (especially other COPLAC institutions and other CSU universities) and of other Eastern majors that have tracks or concentrations (as such an approach was suggested by a consultant during our last curriculum revision but was deemed impractical at that time). We have also had lengthy discussions at departmental retreats about the strengths and weaknesses of our current major, noting developments in our field, the current expertise and interests of our faculty (which have changed a great deal over the last ten years), scheduling difficulties for faculty and students, areas of strength and weakness noted in our majors' cumulative writing portfolios, and our role in a public liberal arts university.

The research and discussions of the past two years have yielded a great deal of material, including multiple models for new curricula. However, in Spring 2011 the consensus of our faculty was that we needed the help of an outside expert to help us synthesize all this material and to push us to the final step: developing a clear and specific proposal, suitable for submission to the University Curriculum Committee and eventual implementation.

Objectives:

As a result of this consensus, we set two objectives for Summer 2011 which have been supported by this grant.

1. To identify and engage a qualified and appropriate curriculum consultant.
2. To collect, collate, and contextualize the materials developed thus far into a self-study packet to be shared with the consultant prior to her visit to our campus (a departmental retreat to be held during the 2011-2012 academic year).

Dr. Barbara Liu, Associate Professor of English, was assigned primary responsibility for achieving these goals.
Activities in Summer 2011:

Objective 1:
In consultation with David Laurence, Director of the Association of Departments of English, Dr. Liu identified and contacted three qualified candidates for the consultancy. After corresponding with these candidates and sharing their qualifications with the English department faculty, Dr. Liu extended an invitation to Dr. Paula M. Krebs of Wheaton College. Dr. Krebs has accepted the invitation. She combines an impressive career as a professor of English (her primary research/teaching interests are in Victorian literature and culture, postcolonial studies, literary and cultural theory, and journalism) with experience in and commitment to the areas of higher education policy and faculty development. Last year she was an ACE Fellow in the University of Massachusetts system, and she is Director of the Summer Institute for Literary and Cultural Studies, a Mellon-Foundation-funded four-week institute and mentoring program aimed at encouraging and preparing students from underrepresented groups to pursue PhDs in English.

Objective 2:
Dr. Liu has completed the self-study and has forwarded it to Dr. Krebs. The self-study includes an eleven-page contextual narrative written by Dr. Liu, specifically for Dr. Krebs. This narrative includes introductions to Eastern and the department, an overview of our current curriculum and our concerns with it, an overview of work completed thus far, and a description of our goals for the retreat Dr. Krebs will lead. In addition to the contextual narrative, Dr. Liu has compiled supporting materials in seventeen appendices. These materials should provide Dr. Krebs with significant insights into our department, and should allow her to successfully lead us to our goal of an implementation-ready curriculum revision proposal.

Subsequent Implementation and Assessment Plans:
The work completed under this grant provides the groundwork for the department curriculum revision retreat to be facilitated by Dr. Krebs during the 2011-2012 academic year. The objective of that retreat will be the development of a specific proposal for a new English major curriculum. If, within nine months of that retreat, the department is able to present a curriculum revision proposal that addresses
the majority of our revision goals to the University Curriculum Committee, we will count the retreat as a success.

**Budget:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stipend for Dr. Barbara Liu</td>
<td>$ 750.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initial Honorarium for Dr. Paula M. Krebs, Curriculum Consultant/Facilitator</td>
<td>$ 750.00</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1500.00</strong></td>
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