English Department Project Brainstorm

ADJUNCT & NEW FACULTY:

--Preparing for Skyline: Help our part-timers with getting information/direction for their classes, such as a special L.A. orientation, active mentoring and reaching out to them to ascertain their needs. Make it clearer who they can ask for help, sharing data of who our students are (Institutional Effectiveness Committee has data that is helpful) and how best to shape policies to fit the needs/challenges of our students. Introduce all new faculty to the Rhetoric as well as support services like Psych Services, Sparkpoint, the Library, Tutoring.

--Office space: Find better office space for PT teachers like they do at CSM. There is some office space at Pac Heights but no heating, no printer, no furniture, isolated and Pac Heights is going away soon.

--Departmental support: Increasing tools for best practices and culturally relevant pedagogy. Having FTers facilitate a series of 30-60 minute workshops (address issues such as class pacing, scaffolding, basics of starting and ask adjunct topics they would like addressed). Deeping our mentoring between FT and PT faculty. Offering a way in which PTers can request FTers to informally sit in on classes to observe and offer helpful feedback. Offering an orientation on the different English classes and their pathways and providing information on Learning Communities: how do they work? Do they work? How can students get involved?

--Connecting: Create recurring and personal contact between FT mentors and PT mentees. Create opportunities for faculty to work together to team-build curriculum. Create monthly opportunities for adjunct to meet. Following up mass department emails with individual ones.

COLLABORATING:

--Threshold concepts: Looking at how we might address those skills that are perennially difficult for students to wrap their minds around (skills like main ideas, thesis writing, "analysis," etc.) in order to share approaches and hone in on specific difficulties in translation.

--Commenting on essays: discuss how we can streamline and make more effective and consistent how we comment on student essays. Issues to consider: marginal and in-essay comments versus end notes, effectively using the departmental rubric, tips on grading faster, best practices in commenting, getting tutor support in the drafting stages.

--Student engagement strategies: Sharing and developing student engagement activities and strategies in the classroom and strategies for dealing with diverse skills sets as well as cultural differences in learning. How to most effectively teach millennials; to meet students where they truly are; to set up clear standards, expectations, and how to teach students to react to/learn from failure. Understanding-addressing student alienation. Deciding what pedagogies to use for changing student populations; combating the vestige of "No-Child Left Behind" and "Common Core"; understanding Umoja Principles in our curriculum.

--Prompt writing-Essay design: How to write good prompts, how to test them, how to teach students how to break them down. Bring our prompts to a meeting, break off into groups and exchange and talk about prompts. Also, weighting essays later in the semester more—give students hope and a fighting chance for their improvement-effort to count.

--How to begin a class: Discuss and create "How to begin a class" reflective practices. Some of us start too advanced. Students need a chance to get comfortable. Best practices to "start" and help ensure retention and making students feel comfortable and invested.

--Norming: Working together more regularly with a shared set of essays to discuss grading approaches, appropriate grades to assign, creating-maintaining consistency in grading.

ENGLISH COURSES:

--Literature courses: Find ways to enhance/increase our literature classes, promote them well for more enrollment and support them even when they don't have enough students. Offering black Literature during the Fall and Spring and bringing back Lit 225.

--Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs): It's time to address our SLO's, as the curriculum committee has already asked us to rethink the 846 SLOs (and we didn't!). I know that we've been developing new SLO's for 105 in our community of practice, so it might be time to do this across the board.

--Course requirements: Rethink some of the "requirements" for some of our courses, including things like mandatory timed writing, teaching "literary criticism" terminology (Marxism, Psychoanalysis, etc.). So, in short, in might be time to systematically review the CORs.

--Supplemental Instruction (S.I.): expand S.I. support (currently S.I.s only in 5 classes) ideally to all 828, 846 and 100 sections. Design SI training more specifically to fit our student population. Consider setting up an S.I. intern program offering credit instead of money.

--Connecting students to campus resources: In the syllabus and/or through class visits/tours, extra credit, connecting students to the Learning Center, and other support services like Psych Services, financial support, workshops that help them with time management, life struggles, etc.

--Prepare for Program Review Fall 2018-Spring 2019: Review-revise English and Literature course outlines and submit to the Curriculum Committee. Clarify stages and timelines for Program Review.

--English Placement: The following was requested by our counselors:
(1) On the English website, create ONE questionnaire (as opposed to different sets of questions for each level) that students can easily take with a counselor that suggests a clear placement; (2) Create a side by side comparison detailing the difference between Engl

	--**Creating shared department philosophies on important issues:** Hiring committees (how to seek out more diverse candidates); appropriate workloads; creating an Honors component in Learning Communities and other methods to increase diversity in and access to our honors courses. Using the approaches of course themes (with all thematically connected texts) and the department commitment to social justice.	100 and Engl 105 (like we have for 828 v. 846 and 846 v. 105); (3) Offer at least one Engl 828 option; (4) Create a formal process to track students who self-place into a higher level of English than their suggested placement and create a consistent process as some students are blocked by Websmart when they try to self-place; (5) Provide a clear guide for counselors on the English website which English courses are accelerated each semester.
ENGLISH RESOURCES:	**THE LEARNING CENTER:**	**ONLINE TEACHING—CANVAS:**
--**Rhetoric:** Expanding the instruction, paper models, etc for the literature section in the Rhetoric: Chapter 12. --**Collection of model papers:** Put together an online collection of A-quality papers for each of our English classes to help students, new faculty, and tutors in the Learning Center have a clearer sense of standards and expectations as well as the differences between the different English classes. --**CTTL:** Reserve space in the CTTL to run English focused workshops. Design professional development that is on-going rather than "one and done." Design follow up to instructional workshops to reflect on effectiveness, value of the activities. --**Reading Apprenticeship (R.A.):** Share the materials and effective practices from those trained in R.A. so all English faculty can integrate the strategies into their curriculum. Create workshops for students focused on R.A. concepts and strategies. --**Sharing materials:** Create an online share-space linked to the English homepage where faculty can upload relevant articles, materials from conferences, etc they would like to share with their colleagues. --**Teaching materials:** Example syllabi, assignment sheets, rubrics, lesson plans, etc.	--**Increase visibility of TLC:** Connect new faculty to the TLC and explain how to enroll students; how to connect use of TLC with extra credit; actively destigmatizing tutoring; make tour/class visit sign-ups easy, consistent and early on; add TLC information to every English syllabus; more advertising in the form of bookmarks, flyers in mailboxes, emails. --**Tutoring:** Revisit ways to make tutoring free again or better advertise to students and faculty that peer tutoring is free and how to enroll. English can more actively recruit their outstanding students for peer tutoring and guide them towards LSKL 110, the tutor training course they can take over a semester or in a shorter summer hybrid course. --**Strengthen TLC-English connections:** Make regular meetings with English faculty and WRL tutors to discuss tutoring challenges, session priorities, English department values, writing prompts (use March flex days?). Revisit past practice of including English faculty tutoring in TLC as part of their teaching loads. Help the TLC advocate for increased budget for more WRL-ESOL graduate and peer tutors; create a repository of current English papers prompts tutors can access and use while tutoring; introduce English faculty to the Directed-Learning-Activities in the TLC they can supplement their instruction with. --**Workshops:** Return to regular sign-ups for English teachers to teach workshops in TLC. Assist Jarrod and Christina as they pilot a series of composition-related workshops they will co-design and co-teach for spring.	--**Schedule regular meetings for online faculty to interact:** either once a semester or yearly, have a meeting with the online English faculty—Skype and in person, and include campus Canvas experts to discuss concerns and best practices. Other suggested meeting topics: cultural-bias in online classroom design, retention and high online drop rates, feedback on each other's classes, discuss current published articles on online teaching, discuss how we tailor what we are doing with each student based on background and preparedness. --**Create a short course to prepare students for learning online:** how to be a good online student, self-motivation that is needed, self-assessment if online is best for you, actively communicating with your professor, how to utilize resources; could be 2 week mini-course for credit taught by an instructor with readings, quizzes, etc. --**Proposed changes to Canvas:** allow threaded discussions, allow more than one due date in forums for posts and reactions, ask online teachers to first test and vet new online software, for quizzes, make the instructions visible before the quiz open date, allow a means for teachers to log in as a student so they can see an accurate student view.