Annual British Studies Program Report
Academic Year 2011-12

I. Program

a. Mission statement

The program and minor in British Studies are designed to provide an integrative study of British life and culture throughout the ages. Students examine the impact of British institutions and customs on the American experience and gain an understanding of how British identity has been constituted in its member nations, the European Union, and the global community. The program offers courses and experiences in the study of England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, Northern Ireland, and those countries and territories formerly a part of the British Empire.

b. Program goals and their relationship to the College’s strategic plan

The British Studies program at the College of Charleston offers students unique opportunities to learn more about an important region of the world. Students complete an 18 credit interdisciplinary minor and may participate in one of several popular semester or summer study abroad programs. Our curricular and extracurricular offerings encourage students to cultivate skills in interdisciplinary thinking, reading, and writing, as well as to gain a deeper understanding of British culture in its many forms (political, social, literary, artistic, etc.). Through our program’s guest talks and study abroad courses in particular, students are able to work with specialists in a number of fields and to broaden both their professional and personal horizons. In these ways, the program objectives support the following goals of the College’s strategic plan:

• Goal 1: Provide students a highly personalized education based on a liberal arts and sciences core and enhanced by opportunities for experiential learning.
• Goal 3: Provide students the global and interdisciplinary perspectives necessary to address the social, economic, environmental, ethical, scientific and political issues of the 21st century.
• Goal 4: Establish and promote a vibrant campus-life atmosphere dedicated to education of the whole person through integration of curricular and co-curricular or extracurricular activities

c. Student Learning Outcomes of the program (under development):

Students should understand the history, culture and politics of Great Britain and possess a deeper appreciation of the complex ways that Britain has influenced past and present events and will continue to have an impact on issues in the future.
II. Narrative Summary and Analysis of Program Accomplishments

Program Membership and Organization

Currently the program has 11 faculty affiliates appointed in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences and 11 undergraduate minors, four of whom just graduated spring 2012.

Faculty Affiliates

Doryjane Birrer English
Tim Carens English, Incoming Director of BRST Program (2012-13)
Cara Delay History
Simon Lewis English
Amy McCandless History, Dean of Graduate School
Moore Quinn Anthropology
Kathy Beres Rogers English
Bill Russell English
Myra Seaman English
Catherine Thomas English, Director of BRST Program (2006-12)
Trish Ward English, Chair

British Studies Minors * = graduated Spring 2012

Taylor Blumenberg*
Kristin Brig
Amanda Bush*
Hannah Duffy
Jamie Harris
William Kippins*
Hannah Polakowski
Gillian Rogers*
Taylor Thompson
Bridget Walsh
Caroline Weber

Curriculum

There were no major changes to the curriculum in 2011-12. The department of Political Science revamped its curriculum, necessitating some course prefix changes and the loss of one course offering in distribution category three (British Empire) of the minor; however, this is not anticipated to significantly affect students’ ability to complete that requirement. Some special topics classes and independent studies in English, History, and Political Science have been included for counting for the minor based on
applicability and on a case-by-case basis. Special topics classes of note include my “Love, Sex, and Desire in Shakespeare” study abroad course offered summer 2012 and Moore Quinn’s popular “Peoples and Cultures of Ireland.” While not officially affiliated with the program, Dr. Joe Kelly of the English department also taught an Irish literature course spring 2012 called “Sex, Guns, and God: Irish Literature, Film, and Song.” This course will be reprised fall 2012 and is considered an approved course substitution towards the BRST minor.

One of the challenges for the minor and for the future of the program remains the availability of applicable history courses that count for 6 credits in the first category (among them: Tudor England, Stuart England, Georgian England, Victorian England). Currently, this situation is being remedied via students taking the political science approved course, POLI 352: “Geographies and Politics of the European Union,” and participating in independent studies and study abroad opportunities. The History department has just hired a British historian, however, and starting in the fall, he should be able to contribute to course availability in this distribution area.

**Study Abroad**

**British Studies Summer Consortium**

While the BSP Consortium Program falls partially under the study abroad umbrella, it is also an integral academic factor for many of our minors. This summer we have five C of C students participating, and I will be instructing “Love, Sex, and Desire in Shakespeare.” I attended the annual consortium meeting in Hattiesburg, MS in January of this year (2012) and represented the College’s interests there. We hope to have more C of C students and faculty get involved in this program in the future. These study abroad students often later join the minor as a result of their positive experiences.

**Summer Study Abroad Students**

Kaitlyn Burrell  
Elizabeth Crowley  
O. Corinne Geisel  
Niki Leiva (graduate student)  
Laura Paskoff

**Bilateral Semester Study Abroad Program**

British Studies at C of C now has four bilateral partnerships with British universities: Univ. of Nottingham, Bath-Spa Univ., Univ. of Lincoln, and Buckinghamshire New Univ.

This year we had two College of Charleston students study abroad through our bilateral exchange at U. of Nottingham in spring 2012. We also hosted 10 British students for study abroad this past year—eight from Nottingham and two from Bath-Spa.  

Nottingham and Bath-Spa continue to be our most popular exchanges.
**Programming and Administration**

**Program Meetings**

The British Studies Program Steering Committee of faculty affiliates met one time officially and held several online conversations to discuss initiatives. Issues included:

- Library fund requests (used all of allotted $1000)
- Recruitment for minor and study abroad opportunities—strategies, participation
- Programming opportunities

Faculty affiliates met in April for an end of year program gathering, which was well attended.

**Events and Contributions**

2011-12 was a quieter year for the program, in terms of hosting guest speakers. Our faculty members look forward to expanding our offerings, particularly with additional Irish history and culture courses and study abroad opportunities.

Program accomplishments include:

- Completed improvements to Program representation and publications
  - With the great assistance of Jennifer Smith, updated text and images of BRST web pages and brought pages into conformation with C of C official style sheet. (Fall 2011)
  - Finalized and printed new minor fliers (Jan. 2012)

- Supported British Studies-related guest speaker’s visit to campus
  - Co-sponsored a talk in the English department’s Visiting Scholars Series: Dr. Jeffrey Cohen is Professor of English and the Director of the Medieval and Early Modern Studies Institute (MEMSI) at George Washington University. His talk on medieval emotion and object-oriented theory was entitled, “Feeling Stone.” (September 2011)

- Built stronger relationships with our BRST consortium colleagues and increased involvement of C of C students in BSP courses abroad. Contributed to cross-institutional visibility of C of C and the British Studies Program here.
  - Attended BSP Consortium meeting in Hattiesburg, MS (Jan. 2012) to discuss upcoming summer offerings and outreach initiatives across campuses. Participated in marketing presentation to U. of S. Mississippi students.
- Held C of C student recruitment meeting (Feb. 2012) for BSP summer courses in conjunction with study abroad representative, Sarah Simmonite.

- Attended several study abroad fairs to continue recruiting efforts. (Fall 2011/Spring 2012)

- Met with Drew Young, instructor of the BSP Music Industries class, during his recruitment visit to the C of C campus. Discussed future efforts to expand recruiting here. (March 2012)

- Participated in LCWA-sponsored events and school opportunities
  - Participated in World Cultures Fair (March 2012)
  - Dr. Moore Quinn received LCWA grant funding for her research on Irish peace efforts (Summer 2012)

2011-12 was a successful year for the British Studies program. After six years in the directorship, I will be concluding my term and turning the reins of the program over to the capable hands of my colleague, Dr. Tim Carens. It has been a pleasure directing British Studies, and I look forward to contributing to the program as affiliated faculty in the future.

Respectfully Submitted,

Catherine E. Thomas, Director