# English at MMCC & Carnegie Mellon

## Timeline of Major Events

**1906**  
- English first appears as a **required first-year** course in all 3-year degree programs offered by the just-founded Carnegie Technical Schools & Margaret Morrison Carnegie School. CTS & MMCS offer 3-year degree programs (secretarial, dietetics, dressmaking) and 2-year certificate programs, both very vocational, aimed at working professionals, and roughly equivalent to high school rather than college education.

**1912**  
- English becomes one of four parts of the newly-founded **Division of General Studies**, a service unit of what had by now become Carnegie Institute of Technology. General Studies could not offer degrees but instead provided required courses in English, History, Modern Languages and Social Studies for what had become CIT and Margaret Morrison Carnegie College, now offering 4-year bachelors degrees.
  - General Studies teachers taught 18-20 hours per week and were not required/expected to engage in scholarly research.

**1916**  
- English **minor** offered as an option within Secretarial Studies at MMCC

**1919**  
- English minor developed into an **English major** for MMCC students, along with new BA degrees in history, social studies, and modern languages. And BS degrees in science, home economics, and business studies.
  - The new BA degrees were available only to MMCC students but taught by faculty from the CIT General Studies program
  - Beginning in 1920, the number of MMCC **students** enrolled in the BA degrees steadily **increased** and eclipsed enrollment in more professional-oriented degrees such as Home Economics and Business Studies. By 1973 when MMCC closed, most students were in these four degree programs plus others added later such as psychology and biology.

**1930’s**  
- Division of General Studies became the Division of **Humanities and Social Sciences**, still a service department within CIT and still not able to grant degrees on its own.
1940's • Introduction of the **Carnegie Plan for liberal/professional** education increases the number of English (and other liberal arts) courses taken by engineering and fine arts students. Most engineers, for example, now had three required courses in English.

1950's • Founding of **GSIA** brings new focus on research as a desired faculty activity

• English professors teaching **4 courses** per term, often all composition, with a total of 100 students and a required theme per week per student

1958 • The **BS in Technical Writing & Editing**, the first degree of its kind in the country, was added as a possible major within MMCC under initiative of Erwin Steinberg.

• The TW degree was specifically designed to be a degree that could prepare women for immediate professional work but also work that could be put to the side during childrearing years and then returned to with relative ease.

1960's • In a period of increasing emphasis on education (and government funding for innovative curriculum ideas) the English & History departments organized the **Carnegie Education Center** to develop innovative high school and college curricula and developed nationally-funded and recognized curricula for AP high school English courses.

1965 • **MA degrees** in English and History, with a focus on preparing students to be high school teachers, started with financial backing from a major federal grant linked to the Carnegie Education Center.

1967 • **DA (Doctor of Arts)** degree programs, with a focus of preparing high school and college teachers, were developed by the Carnegie Education Center and funded under a $1 million grant from the Ford Foundation to the Carnegie Education Center.

• DA degrees -- teaching-oriented doctorates that involved 2 years of course work + a substantive curriculum project as the dissertation -- were offered in English, history, math, science, and fine arts.

• DA degrees spread to over a dozen colleges in US in the early 70’s but were phased out most places, including Carnegie Mellon, by the 1980s when PhD degrees became dominant and the necessary terminal degree for those wishing to teach at the post-secondary level.
1968

- CIT becomes Carnegie University then **Carnegie Mellon University**

- **English major**, still in MMCC, requires 10 courses in English beyond the 3 English courses required of all BA students (Composition, Intro to World Lit, and Modern Writers) plus 2 semesters of British history.

- English curriculum **features literature** with a few courses offered in creative writing and writing non-fiction and the possibility of doing the teacher education option to prepare for secondary teaching
  - Of the 38 courses listed in the catalog, 31 are literature courses. The remaining seven are English Composition, Public Speaking*, Creative Writing, Techniques of Fiction, Journalistic Writing, the Nature and Function of Language*, and The Teaching of English in the Secondary Schools*. (* = required for teaching option)

- MMCC majors in English are urged to schedule at least one course in **typewriting** “because employers generally seek more eagerly those who have some secretarial skill than those who have none.” If they are interested in pursuing positions in business, they are encouraged to take “advanced typewriting, shorthand, and other appropriate subjects” (1967-68 Undergraduate Catalog).

- Technical Writing requires balance of science and English courses, including 2 courses each in chemistry, physics, biology, and math + 4 science electives. English courses include 2 semesters of journalism, 2 of Technical Research and Report Writing, and 2 of Graphic Design Fundamentals.

- **English faculty** of 21 includes 18 men and 3 women

1969

- Division of Humanities & Social Sciences becomes **the College of Humanities and Social Sciences**, and degrees in English, Technical Writing, History, etc are transferred from MMCC to H&SS.

- BA in **Creative Writing** is added to BA in English and BS in Technical Writing as available degrees in English. The BA was one of the first undergraduate degrees in Creative Writing in the country and is still, in 2003, one of only a few such programs to offer a full degree rather than a concentration.
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| 1970’s | • As Dean of H&SS, Erwin Steinberg fought for and got substantial **teaching load reductions** for H&SS faculty. Teaching loads went from 4 per semester to 3 and then to 2 per term within a short period. The idea was to allow time for now-required research and publication.  
  
  • Toward the end of the period, faculty in English focused increasingly on **research into writing** and received external funding to support this work.  
  
  • English course offerings expanded to include courses in Language and Communications, including Contemporary Grammar, Linguistics, and Social Dialects. |
| 1978 | • BA in **Professional Writing** added as the fourth major within English in response to student demand for a BA degree focusing on non-fiction writing. Curriculum includes 5 courses in creative writing, 3 in non-fiction, 2 literature courses, and an elective internship. |
| 1980 | • Under H&SS Dean Crecine’s stress on “**competitive advantage**,” English developed a close relationship with AIR (American Institutes for Research) and began new programs focusing on research and teaching of writing  
  
  • MA in **Professional Writing** program started as one of the first degrees of its kind in the US  
  
  • MA and PhD in **Rhetoric** programs started, also some of the first degrees of their kind in the country  
  
  • Renewed emphasis within H&SS on “Liberal/Professional” education  
  
  • Faculty composition begins to shift to include faculty in Rhetoric as well as in Literature and Creative Writing |
| 1984 | • BA in English replaced by BA in **Literary & Cultural Studies**, reflecting changes in the academic landscape of English departments across US |
| 1986 | • PhD in **Literary & Cultural Theory** program added  
  
  • MA in English becomes MA in Literary & Cultural Studies |
| 1992 | • BA in **Rhetorical Studies** added as fifth undergraduate major  
  
  • First catalog mention of minors in English (but probably in place earlier) |
1994 • Master of Design in Communication Planning & Information Design (MCPID) began as new MA degree jointly offered by English and CFA’s School of Design. The degree was and is one of the very few degrees in the country that emphasizes the interaction of visual and verbal communication and admits half of students with writing background, half with design.

1996 • BA in Literary & Cultural Studies and BA in Rhetoric merged to form **BA in English**, The degree combines all three major elements of the department: Literary & Cultural Studies, Rhetoric, and Creative Writing.

2003 • English offers **10 degrees**
  
  o Undergraduate – 122 primary majors + 47 secondary
    ▪ BA in English – 21 primary + 15 secondary
    ▪ BA in Creative Writing – 59 primary + 22 secondary
    ▪ BA in Professional Writing – 30 primary + 10 secondary
    ▪ BS in Technical Writing – 12 primary
  
  o Graduate
    ▪ MA in Professional Writing -- 34
    ▪ MDES in Communication Planning – 16
    ▪ MA in Rhetoric – 5
    ▪ MA in LCS – 12
    ▪ PhD in Rhetoric -- 14
    ▪ PhD in Literary & Cultural Studies -- 15

• **28 faculty** in three programs
  o 10 in Literary & Cultural Studies, 9 in Rhetoric, 8 in Creative Writing + Erwin Steinberg, who is part of both LCS and Rhetoric
  o 15 women and 13 men

• Faculty in English are also involved in the following college and university programs:
  o Bachelor of Humanities & Arts degree, jointly with CFA
  o Bachelor of Humanities & Sciences degree, jointly with MCS
  o Humanities Scholars Program (new in 2003)
  o H&SS minor in Film & Media Studies
  o H&SS minor in Gender Studies
  o H&SS minor in Arts & Society
  o H&SS minor in Linguistics
  o H&SS minor in Science, Technology, and Society
  o Communication Design track within the Information Systems major
  o Carnegie Mellon University Press
  o Center for Arts and Society
  o Center for Cultural Analysis