

Navigating the English Curriculum Landscape: A Critical Analysis of Nepal Sanskrit University's Approach

Diwakar Regmi, PhD

Lecturer : English,

NSU, Pindeshwar Vidyapeeth, Dharan

drdiwakarregmi@gmail.com

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3126/ss.v2i2.69315>

Abstract

This paper offers a critical analysis of the English curriculum at Nepal Sanskrit University, focusing on its structure, content, and implementation strategies. The curriculum, designed to provide students with a comprehensive exploration of the English language and literature, reflects a balance between tradition and modernity. Through an examination of core components such as reading and writing skills, literary analysis, and research writing, the paper assesses the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum. Drawing on insights from stakeholders, including faculty and students, it explores challenges such as resource limitations and the need for real-world English study contexts. Furthermore, it discusses opportunities for innovation and enhancement, including the integration of technology and collaboration with interuniversity institutions. By navigating the landscape of the English curriculum at Nepal Sanskrit University, this paper aims to provide valuable insights into its continual refinement and relevance in the ever-changing educational landscape.

Keywords : English Major, English curriculum standards, integrated curriculum, literature and rhetorics

Introduction

Nepal Sanskrit University (NSU) offers English study courses at the Shastri (Bachelor's) Level. In addition to the Compulsory English courses, which can be replaced by Sanskrit Rachana, the university offers courses on English Majors. The objectives of the Compulsory English and that of the Major English differ considerably. While the courses in compulsory English can be categorized as English for General Academic Purposes, those in Major English serve as English for Specific Academic Purposes (Regmi, 2023, p. 133). In the dynamic realm of academic exploration, the English curriculum at NSU stands as a testament to the fusion of tradition and contemporary relevance, accepting the principle of making a curriculum that demands the

translation of goals into procedures (Pooley, 1941, p. 709). With a meticulous selection of courses spanning foundational language skills in Compulsory English Courses (CEC), to advanced literary analysis and research writing in Optional English Courses (OEC), the curriculum offers students a comprehensive journey through the diverse landscapes of English language and literature.

Considering the distinct academic context of the university and the changing global perspectives, this paper undertakes a critical analysis of NSU's approach to English study. Through an in-depth examination of the curriculum's structure, content, and implementation strategies, the aim is to unravel the intricacies, strengths, and areas of improvement within the framework of English language and literary studies. At its core, this paper seeks to explore the relationship between tradition and innovation inherent in the English curriculum at the university. By navigating through the various components and nuances of the curriculum, it endeavors to shed light on its effectiveness in equipping students with the necessary skills, knowledge, and critical thinking abilities to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world.

Historical Context of English study in Nepal

The historical context of English study in Nepal is a multifaceted narrative shaped by various socio-political and cultural influences over the years. English language education in Nepal traces its origins back to the mid-19th century, during the reign of Rana rulers when English was introduced primarily for administrative and diplomatic purposes under British colonial influence. Initially, English study was accessible only to a privileged few, predominantly members of the ruling elite and the aristocracy. The first school established in 1853, during the Rana era, was an English medium school, established to impart a Western mode of education to the offspring of the ruling elites so that they could secure their elite position and strengthen their regime (Poudel, 2016). The establishment of Trichandra College in 1918 strengthened English as a medium language yet further. After the establishment of Tribhuvan University in 1959, the Nepali government aimed to replace English as the medium of instruction in the university (Poudel, 2016), but, on the contrary, English as a medium of instruction continued to proliferate yet further without any obstruction. With the advent of democracy in the 1950s and subsequent educational reforms, English language education began to spread gradually across different strata of Nepalese society. The establishment of schools, colleges, and universities with English as a medium of instruction played a pivotal role in expanding access to English study, albeit with varying degrees of quality and resources.

Furthermore, the influence of globalization and modernization has significantly impacted the development of the English curriculum in Nepal. In the wake of globalization, English has emerged as a lingua franca of international communication, trade, and diplomacy, thereby expanding its importance in the educational sphere. Recognizing the need to equip students with English proficiency for participation in the global economy, educational policymakers in Nepal have increasingly emphasized the integration of English study into the curriculum. NSU could not stand away from this national as well as global trend. Right from its establishment in 1986, it has included English study in its curriculum. Due to the rapid globalization and unprecedented swings in job markets, English study has been an indispensable part of the university curriculum.

Overview of the English Curriculum at NSU

The English curriculum at NSU has been divided into Compulsory English Courses (CEC) and Optional English Courses (OEC). While CEC offers a comprehensive and structured pathway for students to develop proficiency in the English language, OEC offers an in-depth exploration of literature and critical analysis. The core components of the CEC are meticulously designed to provide students with a strong foundation in reading and writing skills, which are essential for academic and professional success. The CEC in the first year of the program, introduces fundamental skills through the course "Reading and Writing Skills in English" which aims at enabling the students to "recognize, interact with, and critique the different texts and enhance their reading and writing aptitude" (NSU, 2021, p. 17). Similarly, the CEC in the second year program focuses on reading and writing competence through the course "Reading and Writing across the Curriculum" which aims at preparing students "for advanced level of reading and writing skills essential for academic and professional life" (NSU, 2022, p. 21). These compulsory papers lay the groundwork for effective communication and comprehension across various disciplines.

As students progress through the program, they delve deeper into the study of the English language and literature through a series of OEC papers. These papers cover diverse literary genres and periods, including the "History of English and American Literature," "Fiction: Short Stories and Novellas," "Literary Criticism Course," "Poetry: Medieval to the Present," "Drama & Novel" and "Sanskrit literature in English." Each major paper is structured to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of literary forms, themes, and historical contexts, while also refining their analytical and interpretive skills.

Moreover, the curriculum incorporates a focus on research writing and practice, preparing students for academic inquiry and scholarly engagement. The "Research Writing and Practice" paper in the fourth year offers students the opportunity to develop advanced research skills, including conducting literature reviews, formulating research questions, and presenting findings effectively. Additionally, the inclusion of "Art of Professional Communication" as a major paper in the final year underscores the importance of effective communication in diverse contexts, equipping students with the necessary skills for professional success.

In comparison with international English curriculum standards, the English program at NSU demonstrates a commitment to holistic education and the integration of language skills with literary studies traditions including the history of Sanskrit literature and the study of Sanskrit texts in English, making it, recommended by Miller and Jackson (2007), "more integrated and expansive" (p. 682). While emphasizing the development of language proficiency, the curriculum also fosters critical thinking, cultural awareness, and interdisciplinary learning, aligning with the goals of English study in a global context. Through its structured approach and diverse course offerings, the curriculum at NSU prepares students to navigate the complexities of the English language and literature with confidence and proficiency.

Strengths of the English Curriculum

The Compulsory English Courses (CEC) at NSU, specifically the "Reading and Writing Skills in English" course for the first year, present several significant strengths that contribute to the development of students' proficiency in English. Firstly, the course's comprehensive structure, which spans 150 lecture hours, ensures an extensive engagement with a variety of texts and writing styles. This breadth and depth of material allow students to gain a thorough understanding of different literary forms, themes, and cultural contexts, enhancing their ability to critically analyze and interpret diverse texts.

Another notable strength is the inclusion of a wide range of literary and non-literary texts in the syllabus. The selection of works from authors like Virginia Woolf, Pablo Neruda, and Thomas Jefferson, alongside pieces from contemporary writers, offers a rich tapestry of themes and writing styles. This diversity not only broadens students' literary horizons but also fosters critical thinking and reflective skills. Moreover, the structured approach to teaching writing processes—covering narration, description, exemplification, cause and effect, comparison and contrast, definition, and argumentation—provides students with practical, transferable skills essential for academic and professional success. The balanced evaluation scheme, combining internal

assessments with a significant portion of external evaluation, ensures that students are consistently engaged and motivated to excel throughout the course.

Similarly, the Optional English Courses (OEC) at NSU offer a comprehensive and well-rounded curriculum that enriches students' understanding of literature, criticism, and culture through an extensive and detailed syllabus. These courses are designed to provide in-depth knowledge and critical insights into English and American literature, short stories and novellas, literary criticism, poetry, Drama and Novels, an introduction to Sanskrit literature, as well as research writing. Each course is structured to ensure students develop a vigorous understanding of literary history, critical theories, and an appreciation of diverse literary forms and traditions. The syllabus covering such a wide range of disciplines and genres follows the pattern of the curriculum of general humanities followed in the Western world. Columbia University's course, for example, "extends from Homer to Dostoevski, and it includes historical and philosophical works, and some nonfiction prose as well as epic, drama, and novels" (Thomas, 1965, p. 99).

The first course, "History of English and American Literature," prescribed for Shastri first year, covers significant developments from Old English to contemporary American literature. This course is a deep dive into the literary evolution in both Britain and America, highlighting major writers, movements, and the socio-cultural contexts that shaped their works. By studying the literary history of Britain and America, students gain a thorough grounding in the progression of literary thought and style. This historical approach allows students to appreciate the lineage of literary traditions and the transformation of themes, techniques, and societal reflections over time.

In "Fiction: Short Stories and Novellas," prescribed also for the first year, students explore the narrative art of short fiction, delving into the elements and critical reading strategies necessary for understanding and appreciating short stories and novellas. This course includes a diverse selection of works from various periods and genres. By engaging with these texts, students learn to analyze narrative structure, themes, and character development, enhancing their ability to critically engage with fiction.

The "Literary Criticism" course, prescribed for the second year, traces the evolution of literary criticism from ancient Greek and Roman times to contemporary theories. By studying seminal critics and their works, such as Aristotle's "Poetics," Samuel Johnson's "Preface to Shakespeare," and Northrop Frye's "Archetypes of Literature," students are introduced to the foundational concepts and methodologies of literary criticism. This course fosters a critical mindset, enabling students to evaluate and interpret literary texts through various theoretical lenses, including formalism, structuralism, and feminist criticism.

The "Poetry: Medieval to the Present" course, prescribed also for the second year, provides students with a chronological study of poetry, beginning with medieval works and progressing through the Renaissance, Romantic, Victorian, and modern periods. The course emphasizes the structural elements of poetry, such as versification and form, while engaging with significant poets like John Donne, William Wordsworth, Emily Dickinson, and T.S. Eliot. This broad survey helps students understand the evolution of poetic forms and themes, as well as the historical and cultural influences on poetry.

The "Drama and Novel" course offered in the Shastri III Year at NSU exhibits several significant strengths. Primarily, the syllabus showcases a diverse selection of texts spanning from classical to contemporary times, providing students with a comprehensive overview of literary evolution and historical contexts. The inclusion of works by renowned playwrights and novelists such as Aeschylus, Shakespeare, Ibsen, Hardy, and Orwell ensures that students are exposed to seminal texts that have shaped literary traditions. Additionally, the course encompasses a broad range of genres and themes, from ancient Greek tragedies to modern social commentaries and contemporary novels exploring complex human conditions and societal issues. This diversity not only enhances students' critical thinking and analytical skills but also encourages a deeper understanding of the interplay between literature and society. Moreover, the course's design to foster critical insights, creativity, and communication skills is further strengthened by its balanced focus on both drama and novel, with an evaluation scheme that reflects this dual emphasis. The syllabus also includes contemporary authors like Octavia E. Butler, Arundhati Roy, and Elif Shafak, ensuring that students engage with modern voices and current literary trends. Overall, the "Drama and Novel" course is well-rounded, offering a rich and varied literary education that equips students with essential critical, analytical, and communicative abilities.

The "Sanskrit Literature in English" course for third-year Shastri students at NSU is particularly strong in its comprehensive and detailed coverage of Sanskrit literary history and its integration with Western literary perspectives. The syllabus is meticulously structured, beginning with an introduction to the origins and development of Sanskrit literature, and progressing through the major genres and notable authors, including classical poets like Kalidasa and Bharavi, and extending to historical and didactic poetry, as well as romances and scientific literature. This thorough approach ensures that students gain a deep understanding of both the linguistic and aesthetic dimensions of Sanskrit texts. The inclusion of significant works such as the "Bhagavadgita," "Meghaduta," and "Svapnavasavadatta," with English translations, enables students to appreciate the literary and philosophical richness of these texts in a

more accessible language. Additionally, the course bridges Eastern and Western literary traditions, providing comparative insights that enhance students' critical thinking and broaden their cultural perspectives. The curriculum's emphasis on the philosophical underpinnings and diverse genres of Sanskrit literature, coupled with its historical context, equips students with a holistic understanding of one of the world's most ancient and influential literary traditions. This blend of detailed historical content, critical analysis, and the cross-cultural comparison makes the course robust and enriching, fostering both academic and personal growth.

Similarly, the "Research Writing and Practice" course for fourth-year Shastri students stands out for its comprehensive approach to developing essential academic and professional skills. It covers key aspects of research methodology, from question formulation to data analysis, and emphasizes ethical considerations, enabling students to craft well-structured research papers. This hands-on practice ensures they are well-prepared for independent research projects, fostering critical thinking and effective communication. The "Art of Professional Communication" course, prescribed for the same year, covers subjects like different verbal and nonverbal messages, conducting effecting meetings, writing across media, and crafting presentations. This course enhances students' ability to analyze and use language in diverse contexts, improving their overall communicative competence. Together, these courses provide a strong educational foundation, equipping students with the research acumen and language proficiency needed for academic and professional success.

Overall, the strengths of the OEC at NSU lie in its comprehensive coverage, historical depth, and interdisciplinary approach. By offering a detailed exploration of literary history, criticism, and diverse genres, these courses equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary for advanced literary studies and critical analysis. The curriculum not only fosters a profound appreciation of literature but also encourages students to engage with texts critically and creatively, preparing them for various academic and professional pursuits in the field of literature.

Weaknesses and Challenges

The Compulsory English Courses (CEC) at NSU, as outlined in the syllabus, exhibit several weaknesses and challenges that may impact the effectiveness of the program in developing students' reading and writing skills.

One significant weakness lies in the fact that the course description emphasizes the development of reading, writing, analyzing, and critiquing skills (NSU, 2021, p. 17) but provides minimal guidance on how these skills will be taught and assessed. The

syllabus lacks clarity on specific instructional strategies, assessment methods, and learning outcomes, which could lead to inconsistency in teaching approaches and evaluation criteria across different instructors. Without clear benchmarks and expectations, students may struggle to gauge their progress and performance in the course, hindering their overall learning experience.

Another weakness is the imbalance in weightage given to different components of the course. For example, in the evaluation scheme for the courses offered, internal evaluation accounts for only 25% of the total marks, while external evaluation comprises the remaining 75%. This heavy reliance on external examinations places undue pressure on students to perform well in high-stakes assessments, potentially prioritizing rote memorization and exam-oriented learning over deep engagement with course content and critical thinking skills. A more balanced approach to evaluation, with greater emphasis on continuous assessment and feedback, could better support students' holistic development and learning outcomes.

Similarly, the Optional English Courses (OEC) offered at NSU encompass a wide array of subjects, ranging from the history of English and American literature to literary criticism, poetry, fiction, Sanskrit literature, drama, novels, and research writing. While the syllabi present a comprehensive overview of each subject, several weaknesses and challenges need to be addressed.

Starting with the course on the history of English and American literature, the syllabus appears dense and potentially overwhelming for first-year students. Due to its extensive coverage of literary periods, movements, and authors, most students struggle to digest and engage deeply with the material within the limited timeframe. The course is wider than the undergraduate English course of the University of Oxford, which, in the first year, covers only “Introduction to English Language and Literature”, “Early Medieval Literature, 650–1350”, “Literature in English, 1830–1910”, and “Literature in English, 1910–present day” (University of Oxford, 17 May 2024).

Similarly, in the Literary Criticism course, while the syllabus covers a wide range of critical theories and thinkers, the presentation of material is too theoretical and abstract for the students. Though the theories are originatively praxis in themselves, (Spanos, 1989, p. 65), without practical applications or real-world examples, students of NSU cannot grasp the relevance and significance of different critical approaches. Additionally, the course focuses on British critics and reviewers, leaving out several influential critics and literary theorists who are credited to have influenced the critics discussed.

Similarly, the Sanskrit Literature in English course presents a unique opportunity for students to explore the rich literary tradition of Sanskrit texts. However, the syllabus appears heavily focused on historical and philosophical aspects, potentially neglecting the aesthetic and literary dimensions of Sanskrit literature. Additionally, the prescribed texts have posed accessibility challenges for students who are not proficient in Sanskrit or lack access to translations. Another challenge involved with teaching the course underscores the role and competency of the teachers at the university, since the course, due to language-related reasons, has to be dealt with by English teachers who have no qualification in Sanskrit Literature, or who are not trained in the subject matter. This challenge was discussed at the refreshment training for English teachers held from June 1st to June 5th, 2023 in Kathmandu, when one of the participants raised concerns about the need for revision of the course for two reasons: first, it is too complicated due to too many references, and second, teachers at the university are not qualified enough to teach the course.

Implementation and Practical Considerations

Implementation of the English curriculum at NSU requires a strategic approach and concerted effort from all stakeholders involved. One key strategy for effective implementation is the provision of comprehensive training and support for faculty members responsible for delivering the curriculum. Faculty development programs focused on pedagogical techniques, language teaching methodologies, and assessment strategies can enhance educators' effectiveness in the classroom and ensure high-quality instruction. Additionally, ongoing professional development opportunities and collaboration with peers can foster innovation and continuous improvement in teaching practices.

Moreover, active engagement and collaboration among stakeholders, including faculty, students, administration, and the broader community, are essential for the successful implementation of the English curriculum. Faculty members play a crucial role in curriculum development, delivery, and assessment, while students are active participants in the learning process, providing valuable feedback and insights into their learning experiences. The administration plays a supportive role in providing resources, infrastructure, and policy guidance, while the community can contribute to students' learning through experiential opportunities, guest lectures, and community-based projects.

The administration and faculty play a crucial role in implementing the syllabus effectively. However, their reluctance to follow the syllabus guidelines is evident, as

many of these guidelines have been ignored. For instance, although the syllabus specifies that each course comprises 150 lecture hours with a weekly schedule of six hours (NSU, 2021, p. 273), the reality in the university's constituent campuses is that courses are taught only five days a week. A similar lack of adherence to guidelines is observed in the implementation of internal evaluation procedures as well.

Addressing challenges and overcoming barriers to implementation requires a proactive and multi-faceted approach. Collaboration between faculty and administration to address resource constraints, such as securing funding for instructional materials and technology upgrades, can alleviate barriers to effective teaching and learning. Additionally, targeted interventions to support marginalized students, such as language support services or tutoring programs, can address equity issues and ensure that all students have access to the resources and support they need to succeed.

Furthermore, examples of successful implementation initiatives can provide valuable insights and inspiration for improving the English curriculum. For instance, initiatives that leverage technology, such as online learning platforms or multimedia resources, can enhance student engagement and provide opportunities for personalized learning experiences. Collaborative projects with community partners, such as local schools or businesses, can enrich students' learning experiences and connect classroom learning to real-world contexts. By highlighting and replicating successful implementation initiatives, NSU can strengthen its English curriculum and enhance the quality of education for its students.

Student Perspectives and Experiences

The survey among ten students at NSU (see Appendix), encompassing both optional and compulsory English students, offers a nuanced perspective on their experiences and views regarding the English curriculum, which provides valuable insights into the effectiveness and impact and contribute to the implementation process. Overall, 20% of the students expressed satisfaction with the curriculum, while the majority found it challenging. This sentiment underscores a disparity in the preparedness of students, particularly those with a weaker English foundation from Gurukul, making the curriculum feel more strenuous for them.

Students identified different components of the curriculum as most beneficial depending on their year and course focus. Third-year students unanimously appreciated the "Sanskrit Literature in English" course, highlighting its relevance and value. Conversely, compulsory English students found the "Reading and Writing Skills in English" course to be particularly beneficial, likely due to its practical application in

improving writing skills. First and second-year Optional English students predominantly valued the "History of English and American Literature," indicating an appreciation for the foundational knowledge it provides.

A significant strength of the curriculum, as noted by 80% of the Compulsory English students, is its inclusion of local content, which helps contextualize their learning within their cultural and historical framework, but the concerns regarding lack of the local content in the OEC was raised by the Optional English students. However, a considerable number of students were unable to pinpoint additional strengths, reflecting either a lack of engagement or a need for a clearer understanding of the curriculum's benefits.

While acknowledging certain merits, students have delineated multiple domains necessitating enhancement. The predominant critique pertains to the curriculum's rigor, which is ascribed to the students' insufficient foundation in English from preceding educational experiences. Moreover, the sporadic attendance of both teachers and students has been cited as an impediment to the effective completion of the course, indicative of the university's administrative and logistical problems. Concerns have also been voiced regarding the deficiencies in the construction of examination papers, highlighting errors and a diminished level of rigor. A further grave concern raised by the students is the redundancy observed in the fiction course, which is redundantly incorporated into both the first year and the third year curricula of the Shastri level. A proposition from a student suggests the substitution of this repetitive element with a course focused on Non-Western Studies, thereby enriching the academic diversity.

The implementation of the curriculum also faced criticism. Many students felt that the traditional lecture methods were not engaging enough and suggested a need for more practical writing exercises. There was a call for the curriculum to include courses on teaching, indicating a desire for more professionally oriented content. This call echoes the view of Miller and Jackson (2007) who write, "The greatest weakness in English majors is their limited attention to the needs of the many majors who plan to teach" (p. 684). The students also suggested that the curriculum should be simplified to better match their capabilities and backgrounds, and the prescribed books should be accessible and available.

Regarding the curriculum's alignment with evolving language study trends, students were divided. Some advocated for an employment-oriented curriculum, while others emphasized the need to incorporate modern technology into the learning process. These suggestions reflect a recognition of the changing landscape of language studies and a desire for the curriculum to keep pace with these developments. Support and

engagement in the learning journey were areas where students felt improvements were necessary. The traditional lecture methods and a centralized examination system that favored rote memorization were major points of contention. Students recommended an evaluation system that focuses more on understanding and application rather than memorization.

In conclusion, while students at NSU recognize some valuable aspects of the English curriculum, such as the inclusion of local content and beneficial specific courses, they also highlight significant areas for improvement. Simplifying the curriculum, increasing practical writing exercises, incorporating modern technology, and ensuring regular attendance of both students and teachers are among the key recommendations. Addressing these issues could enhance the curriculum's effectiveness and better align it with students' academic and career aspirations.

Future Directions and Recommendations

There are several avenues for enhancing the English curriculum at NSU to better prepare students for the challenges and opportunities of the future. Many strategies for the enhancement of the curriculum align with the strategies adopted by the universities abroad, while many others are specific to NSU. Before discussing the strategies specific to NSU concerning the implementation of the present curriculum, it is relevant to quote the five-point visions suggested by *The English Coalition Conference* concerning the improvement of English majors, edited by Lloyd-Jones & Lunsford (1989):

1. All English majors should know several methodologies of reading and interpretation, be acquainted with the premises and the modes of arguing that each pursues, and be aware of issues connected with a choice of one perspective versus another. Examples of such methods of reading and interpretation include aesthetic, biographical, formalist, gender-specific, rhetorical, and political.
2. All English majors should know something of the critical and historical principles behind the construction of literary and cultural histories. They should know the terminology of literary periods, be aware of controversies concerning the establishment of distinctions between periods, and understand the general significances attached to various views taken of the transitions between periods. They should also have opportunities to examine the status of the concept of nationality as it appears in literary study.
3. All English majors should know something about the study of language and discursive practices. Avenues to such knowledge include study in the history of

the language, formal grammar and rhetoric, psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics, and semiotics.

4. All English majors should have the experience of reading texts drawn from the full diversity of literary periods and genres, written by authors representing the full range of social, ethnic, and national origins that have contributed to the corpus of literature in English. They should also have experience with critical texts and with expository prose and other types of writings that have frequently not been made use of in the curriculum of the major, including writing by their fellow students.
5. All English majors should practice writing in several modes and for different audiences and purposes, with an awareness of the social implications and theoretical issues these shifts raise. Classroom practice should bring teachers and students to experience writing, reading, listening, and speaking as integrated, mutually supporting exercises. (p. 35)

One potential enhancement suggested by curriculum experts and relevant to NSU involves “integrating computer technology into pedagogy and curriculum to promote learning and prepare students for careers in which technological proficiency is expected” (Ade Ad Hoc Committee On The English Major, 2004, p. 207). Such an integration is useful not only to students but also to teachers as embracing digital tools such as multimedia resources, online platforms, AI language models, and interactive learning applications can enhance engagement, accessibility, and flexibility in the delivery of the curriculum. By incorporating technology effectively, educators can create dynamic and interactive learning experiences that cater to diverse learning styles and preferences, while also preparing students for digital literacy and communication skills necessary in the modern world. Such a fusion of literary studies, digital literacy, and writing practice can make NSU, to borrow the words of Carpini, “a site of humanistic inquiry as well as a site of career” (2007, p. 17). Such an integrated praxis can turn the university into the producer of knowledge from the mere distributor.

Another chief area of improvement in the syllabus is to deal with “the problematic nature of the split between composition and literature” (Brooks, Zhao, & Braniger, 2010, p. 42). The OEC explicitly offers literary texts, leaving aside writing courses like Composition and Rhetorics. Such a gap in the syllabus results in students’ incompetence in writing, whether it is practical writing, academic writing, or creative writing. Instead of such a split between rhetoric and literature, the university can offer, as Brooks et al. suggest, an integrated course that prepares students for integration in their professional

lives, in which “they need to perform the integrations of general analytical thinking within the context of particular professional rhetorical acts” (2010, p. 48).

Furthermore, collaboration with inter-university institutions presents an exciting opportunity to enrich the English curriculum through exchange programs, joint research initiatives, and partnerships. By forging connections with different universities and organizations, NSU can provide students with exposure to diverse perspectives, cultures, and educational practices. Interuniversity collaboration can facilitate opportunities for faculty development, and research collaboration, fostering academic competence among students and faculty. Additionally, partnerships with interuniversity institutions can facilitate the sharing of best practices, resources, and expertise, enabling continuous improvement and innovation in the English curriculum.

Continuous evaluation and revision of the curriculum based on feedback and changing needs is essential for ensuring its relevance and effectiveness in meeting the evolving demands of students and society. Regular assessment of student learning outcomes, feedback from stakeholders, and monitoring of emerging trends in English language education can inform curriculum revisions and enhancements. Additionally, ongoing professional development for faculty members and engagement with educational research can provide valuable insights into effective teaching practices, curriculum design, and assessment strategies. By fostering a culture of continuous improvement and innovation, NSU can ensure that its English curriculum remains dynamic, responsive, and aligned with the needs and aspirations of the students.

Conclusion

The critical analysis of the English curriculum at NSU highlights its strengths in providing a comprehensive exploration of language, literature, and critical thinking skills. While the curriculum demonstrates a commitment to tradition and foundational knowledge, there are opportunities for enhancement, particularly in integrating technology, addressing real-world language contexts, including a job-oriented integrated curriculum, and fostering inter-university collaboration. Despite its strengths, ongoing evaluation and revision based on feedback and changing needs are essential to ensure the curriculum's continued relevance and effectiveness. Moving forward, a concerted effort from stakeholders is needed to further refine and innovate the English curriculum, ultimately equipping students with the skills, knowledge, and global competence.

References

- Ade Ad Hoc Committee On The English Major. (2004). The Undergraduate English Major. *Profession*, 178–217. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25595786>
- Brooks, R., Zhao, P., & Braniger, C. (2010). Redefining the undergraduate English writing major: An integrated approach at a small comprehensive university. In G. A. Giberson & T. A. Moriarty (Eds.), *What we are becoming: developments in undergraduate writing majors* (pp. 32–49). University Press of Colorado. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt4cgppw.6>
- Carpini, D. D. (2007). Re-writing the humanities: The writing major's effect upon undergraduate studies in English departments. *Composition Studies*, 35(1), 15–36. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43501673>
- Lloyd-Jones, R., & Lunsford, A. A. (Eds.). (1989). *The English Coalition Conference: Democracy through Language*. National Council of Teachers of English.
- Miller, T. P., & Jackson, B. (2007). What are English majors for? *College composition and communication*, 58(4), 682–708. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20456970>
- NSU. (2021). *Bachelor Level Curriculum: First Year*.
- NSU. (2022). *Bachelor Level Curriculum: Second Year*.
- NSU. (2023). *Optional English 414: Drama and novel course syllabus*.
- NSU. (2023). *Optional English 415: Sanskrit literature in English course syllabus*.
- Pooley, R. C. (1941). Basic principles in English curriculum-making. *The English Journal*, 30(9), 709–717. <https://doi.org/10.2307/805893>
- Poudel, T. (2016, January 1). English in Nepal: From colonial legacy to professionalism. *ELT Choutari*. [English in Nepal: From colonial legacy to professionalism | ELT CHOUTARI](http://www.eltchoutari.com/2016/01/english-in-nepal-from-colonial-legacy-to-professionalism/)
- Regmi, D. (2023). Challenges of teaching English at Nepali Sanskrit University. *Shodh Sudha*, 1(1), 130–142. <https://doi.org/10.3126/ss.v1i1.59739>
- Spanos, W. V. (1989). Theory in the undergraduate English curriculum: Towards an interested pedagogy. *Boundary 2*, 16(2/3), 41–70. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/303295>
- Thomas, R. (1965). The humanities in American undergraduate education. *College English*, 27(2), 93–103. <https://doi.org/10.2307/373179>
- University of Oxford. (17 May 2024). “English Language and Literature”, [English Language and Literature | University of Oxford](http://www.english.ox.ac.uk/), May 22, 2024.

Appendix

Questionnaire on the English Curriculum at Nepal Sanskrit University

1. Are you satisfied with the English curriculum at Nepal Sanskrit University?
2. What aspects of the English curriculum do you find most beneficial or valuable in your academic journey?
3. In your opinion, what are the strengths of the English curriculum?
4. What are the areas for improvement within the English curriculum?
5. How do you feel about the implementation of the English curriculum? Are there any challenges or barriers you've encountered?
7. What are your expectations from the English curriculum in terms of preparing you for academic and professional success?
8. Can you share any specific suggestions or recommendations for enhancing the English curriculum?
9. How do you perceive the alignment between the English curriculum and the evolving needs and trends in language education?
10. Have you felt adequately supported and engaged in your learning journey through the English curriculum? If not, what improvements would you suggest?
11. Looking ahead, what changes or enhancements would you like to see in the English curriculum to better meet your academic and career aspirations?