**Department of English Syllabus Blurb (Statement of Values)**

The UW English Department aims to help students become more incisive thinkers, effective communicators, and imaginative writers by acknowledging that language and its use is powerful and holds the potential to empower individuals and communities; to provide the means to engage in meaningful conversation and collaboration across differences and with those with whom we disagree; and to offer methods for exploring, understanding, problem solving, and responding to the many pressing collective issues we face in our world—skills that align with and support the University of Washington’s mission to educate “a diverse student body to become responsible global citizens and future leaders through a challenging learning environment informed by cutting-edge scholarship.”

As a department, we begin with the conviction that language and texts play crucial roles in the constitution of cultures and communities. Our disciplinary commitments to the study of language, literature, and culture require of us a willingness to engage openly and critically with questions of power and difference. As such, in our teaching, service, and scholarship we frequently initiate and encourage conversations about topics such as race, immigration, gender, sexuality, and class. These topics are fundamental to the inquiry we pursue. We are proud of this fact, and we are committed to creating an environment in which our faculty and students can do so confidently and securely, knowing that they have the backing of the department.

Towards that aim, we value the inherent dignity and uniqueness of individuals and communities. We aspire to be a place where human rights are respected and where any of us can seek support. This includes people of all ethnicities, faiths, genders, national origins, political views, and citizenship status; nontheists; LGBQTIA+; those with disabilities; veterans; and anyone who has been targeted, abused, or disenfranchised.