

Major/Program: English Department

ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

Fall 2016-Spring 2017

What are the student learning outcomes in the <u>major/program</u>?
<p>The Bachelor of Arts in English degree program educates students in the history, linguistics, aesthetics, and analysis of literature in the English language.</p> <p>The Department of English also offers a substantial program in writing, including creative writing, professional writing, and expository writing. The Department regularly offers courses in the full range of English and American literary studies, including the diverse groups that make up our literary culture.</p> <p>Students are given a grounding in close critical reading, integrating such reading within an analytical essay. They are also exposed to the breadth of literary writing within the English language across diverse genres and periods.</p> <p>Student learning outcomes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Students will develop a wide knowledge of the history and traditions of literature written in the English language and an appreciation for the diverse cultures and backgrounds that contribute to the production of literature in English.2. Students will learn critical and analytical thinking skills, especially close reading skills.3. Students will learn how to comprehend and produce contextually informed arguments about literature.4. Students will learn to write and communicate clearly and effectively.
Which outcome(s) did you assess this academic year?
<p>We assessed goals 2 and 4 in keeping with our four-year continuous assessment cycle. (See above)</p>
How did you assess the learning outcomes this academic year?
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. We performed a class assessment of W231, Professional Writing Skills.2. We performed an assessment of revision in W130/W131 Composition classes.3. We conducted a senior survey in our L440 classes. <p>Our departmental plan is to have yearly assessment of Professional Writing, Composition, and Literature courses.</p>

1. In W231, we focused on two outcomes (1. Students should show an awareness of audience. 2. Students should communicate in a clear, efficient style). To assess the outcomes, students in five W231 courses were given the same assignment, and those were collected and analyzed by the Director of Professional Writing. Our results found that the students are more aware of audience in content than in form, so the average of content awareness was 3.5 on a 1-5 scale, whereas the awareness of starting with the main point was a 2.4 on a 1-5 scale and only 30% crafted the correct business format.
2. With W130/W131 the Composition committee assessed how revision was being completed across the many different sections of the class. The committee found that the actual revision process was similar across the classes but that it was not achieving the same results because of the difference in student ability levels across the classes. The committee was concerned since passing introductory composition correlates with higher retention rates overall, so the committee decided to switch the placement test to see if that allows the department to place students in the correct classes. It is the hope of the Composition committee that revision will work better with students who are placed in the correct classes.
3. We conducted a senior survey in our L440 capstone course. The results of this survey made it clear that students are not aware of the graduate school options or field options available to them upon graduation.

Please describe any programmatic changes you have made or are planning to make based on the data you have collected (action steps).

1. We are planning to have W231 teachers stress the format of the documents more than they do currently, and we will continue our assessment of these programs. There was also a discrepancy among classes, so we make sure all teachers are consistent with the main topics.
 2. We implemented a new placement test. Now students write an essay in response to a prompt, and then two English teachers read the essay and agree on a placement for the student. So far, it seems to be working well, though we do not have data yet, but we have noticed there are a number of students who are on the border between the classes, and we are exploring the option of a summer bridge program for those students.
 3. We have decided to do two things in response to this problem. First, we are going to run a survey in lower level classes to see what the students know so that we can use that as a guide to helping them learn about options after graduation. Second, we are going to implement a process of "aggressive advising." We will invite all the current majors in for a long advising session (30-60 minutes) where we discuss their future planes. We want to make sure they know what to do or know how to find out what to do after graduation.
- 1-3 Group Action: we have decided on some departmental actions steps that hopefully will help some global issues students have expressed formally on the senior reviews and informally during office conversations.
- Students have been confused about who to consult for advising, so we have decided to divide the new majors between advisors. In the past, the chair has been responsible for advising all majors.
 - Students have said that communicating with professors has been difficult. Besides the new "aggressive advising" process, we have decided to start a department e-newsletter to

communicate more directly with our majors.

--We are going to start having senior exit interviews to find out more about what the students think needs improvement in the department.

1. In our action steps last year, we wanted to have literature students focus more on close-reading strategies and short informal assignments to get them more comfortable interpreting. We have implemented those two steps in our literature courses, and the assessment tools (exams and essays) we used indicate that the students are becoming more proficient.

****Note:** Please use this template to provide the responses to the prompts above.**