

AY 2018-2019 Assessment

Bachelor's Degree in English

College: Arts and Sciences

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Date: 06/20/19

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Date: 7/1/2019

Northwestern State Mission: Northwestern State University is a responsive, Student-oriented institution that is committed to the creation, dissemination, and acquisition of knowledge through teaching, research, and service. The University maintains as its highest priority excellence in teaching in graduate and undergraduate programs. Northwestern State University prepares its Students to become productive members of society and promotes economic development and improvements in the quality of life of the citizens in its region.

College of Arts and Sciences' Mission: The College of Arts & Sciences, the largest college at Northwestern State University, is a diverse community of scholars, teachers, and students, working collaboratively to acquire, create, and disseminate knowledge through transformational, high-impact experiential learning practices, research, and service. The College strives to produce graduates who are productive members of society equipped with the capability to promote economic and social development and improve the overall quality of life in the region. The College provides an unequalled undergraduate education in the social and behavioral sciences, English, communication, journalism, media arts, biological and physical sciences, and the creative and performing arts, and at the graduate level in the creative and performing arts, English, TESOL, and Homeland Security. Uniquely, the College houses the Louisiana Scholars' College (the State's designated Honors College), the Louisiana Folklife Center, and the Creole Center, demonstrating its commitment to community service, research, and preservation of Louisiana's precious resources.

Department of English, Foreign Languages, and Cultural Studies Mission Statement: The Department of English, Foreign Languages, and Cultural Studies has an active, diverse, and vital academic program, offering the Bachelor of Arts in English, the Minor in English, the Minor in Spanish, the Master of Arts in English, and two Graduate Certificates: Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) and Writing for Business, Industry, and Technology (WBIT is a new program, beginning in fall, 2017). The Department teaches the required English core courses for undergraduates as well as large number of courses required for students in various majors. The Department serves over 6,000 NSU students per academic year, and this total does not include our English dual-enrollment program. Graduates are prepared to work in a wide variety of industries, in jobs that require skills in communication, data analysis, and creative, innovative thinking.

Undergraduate English Major Mission Statement: The undergraduate major in English is a dynamic, student-oriented program focused on rigorously preparing

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students to achieve in diverse fields. The undergraduate program focuses on developing, providing, and supporting innovative, responsive, and accessible education. The program encourages a mastery of disciplinary literature, thoughtful research, professional development, and cross-curricular innovation as members of an engaged scholarly community. Through encompassing a diverse suite of related fields of study, the English major offers its students access to creative, critical, and compositional skills, providing them invaluable versatility in a rapidly changing market.

Methodology: The assessor(s) will electronically collect student writing and assignment descriptions. The assessor(s) will determine which SLOs each assignment targets. Student writing will be assessed using the rubric appended to this document. On the rubric, the “targeted” column pertains to whether the SLO was explicitly targeted by the paper assignment, as determined by the assessor(s). On the rubric, the “evaluation” column is for the assessor’s evaluation of how well the paper meets each SLO. The assessor(s) will mark “not applicable” for any goal that is not relevant to the pertinent assignment. The assessor(s) will mark a writing sample “weak” if the goal was explicitly targeted by the assignment but does not appear in the paper. Faculty will meet during the fall 2017 on call week to discuss the results and determine the actions that need to be taken in response to the evaluation. Individual meetings will be held with faculty during on call week, if necessary. The Director of Undergraduate Studies, in consultation with faculty and the department advisory committee, will propose changes to measurable outcomes, assessment tools for the next period, and, where needed, curriculum and program changes.

Student Learning Outcomes

SLO 1. Analysis and interpretation of evidence. Students in the English BA program will perform analysis and interpretation of evidence. In literature, film studies, and folklore papers, students will use textual evidence from close reading to defend an interpretive thesis, including locating the significance of chosen passages in the context of a larger work. For those students who take professional writing courses, this evidence may include primary materials such as websites, job ads, writing samples, etc. and the argument may be practical rather than interpretive.

Measure 1.1 (Direct – Skill)

On an annual basis, a sample number of research papers and/or projects from all English courses taught that year will be evaluated by a panel of faculty members, using the standardized *Assessment Rubric for English Major Writing* (attached). The writing will be evaluated to determine if students can demonstrate a basic ability to analyze and interpret evidence from a variety of texts, broadly defined to include fiction, nonfiction, drama, film, new media, and primary texts including interviews and oral histories. At least 95% of students sampled will score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Findings: Target not met.

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Analysis: In AY 2017-18, the target was met, as 64 out of 70 (91%) student projects were judged competent or higher in their ability to analyze and interpret evidence from a variety of texts. This represented a 2% increase from the previous year. Increased instruction in all methods of close reading was the reason for this increase. Based on the analysis of these results, and to further aid students in their use of textual evidence, faculty increased instruction of the skills of close reading, particularly as they apply to nonfiction, primary texts, and scholarly sources. This instruction took various forms, including textual explication assignments, rhetorical analyses, and video essays.

In AY 2018-19, the target was not met, as 91 out of 97 (93.81%) student projects were judged competent or higher in their ability to analyze and interpret evidence from a variety of texts. This still represents a 3% increase from the previous year, but did not meet the goal of 95%, which was a new target set for this year. Increased instruction in the all methods of close reading is the reason for this increase. Further action will be taken to emphasize the skills of close reading, particularly as they apply to nonfiction, primary texts, and scholarly sources.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AY 2018-2019 results, and in conjunction with the drive for continuous improvement, further actions will be taken to sustain and advance students' ability to analyze and interpret evidence from a variety of texts. In 2019-2020 courses will be further refined to increase instruction in the skills of close reading, particularly as they apply to nonfiction, primary texts, and scholarly sources. Because improvements were made, but did not meet the target, the target will remain at 95% of student work receiving a score of competent or higher on the *Rubric for English Major Writing* for AY 2019-2020.

SLO 2. Application of theory. Students in the English BA program will use theory to inform their analysis and argumentation. This theory may be literary, philosophical, cultural, psychological, political, economic, rhetorical, etc. in nature, and students will reference it explicitly in their writing, as, for example, an explicitly formulated Marxist analysis of the representation of class in a novel. This outcome does not pertain to general approaches that may have an unstated theoretical basis. For example, a focus on the passivity of female characters in a novel would not count for this outcome, unless feminist theory is an explicit topic of the paper as well.

Measure 2.1 (Direct – Knowledge/Skill)

On an annual basis, a sample number of research papers and/or projects from all English courses taught that year will be evaluated by a panel of faculty members, using the standardized *Assessment Rubric for English Major Writing* (attached). The writing will be evaluated to determine if students can demonstrate a basic knowledge of fundamental principles of theory as it relates to a given course. At least 95% of students sampled will score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

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Findings: Target was not met.

Analysis: In AY 2017-18, the target was met, as 23 out of 25 (92%) student projects were judged competent or higher in their ability to use theory to inform their analysis and argumentation. This represented an 11% increase from the previous year. Increased instruction in theory and its applications was the reason for this increase. Based on the analysis of these results, and to further aid students in achieving basic knowledge of fundamental principles of theory, faculty increased instruction in theory as it relates to a given course and across our curriculum. This instruction took various forms, including more reading assignments, short reading response essays, and presentations on specific theories or theorists.

In AY 2018-19, the target was not met, as 52 out of 61 (85%) student projects were judged competent or higher in their ability to use theory to inform their analysis and argumentation. This represents a 7% decrease from the previous year. The greatly increased number of assignments assessing SLO 2.1 (61 versus 25), combined with a new, higher target is the reason for this decrease. Further action will be taken to instruct students in the fundamental principles of theory as it relates to a given course and across our curriculum. Discussions will be held with instructors on ways to better integrate theory into their courses and assignments.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the results from AY 2018-2019, and in conjunction with faculty drive for continuous improvement, further actions will be taken to advance students' ability to use theory to inform their analysis and argumentation. In 2019-2020 courses will be further refined to increase instruction in the fundamental principles of theory as it relates to a given course and across our curriculum. Training and discussions will be held with instructors on ways to better integrate theory into their courses and assignments. Because of our decline, we will keep our target at 95% of student work receiving a score of competent or higher on the *Rubric for English Major Writing* for AY 2019-2020.

SLO 3. Application of established methodologies in the field. Students in the English BA program will use established methodologies of literary criticism. This outcome pertains to the use of the discourse of literary criticism, film studies, rhetorical theory, and cultural studies at a complex level, in regard to either: (a) specific approaches to interpretation that have established currency in the discipline, such as feminism and new historicism, but which do not involve the explicit theorization of learning outcome #2; and (b) terminology and techniques of formal analysis wielded in a more systematic and knowledgeable manner than the more general close reading that is covered by learning outcome #1.

Measure 3.1 (Direct – Knowledge/Skill)

On an annual basis, a sample number of research papers and/or projects from all English courses taught that year will be evaluated by a panel of faculty members, using the standardized *Assessment Rubric for English Major Writing* (attached). The writing

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will be evaluated to determine if students can demonstrate a basic knowledge of the methodologies that apply to a given course. At least 95% of students sampled will score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Findings: Target was not met.

Analysis: In AY 2017-18, the target was met, as 34 out of 37 (92%) student projects were judged competent or higher in their ability to use established methodologies of literary criticism. There was no change from the previous year, despite increased instruction in established methodologies. Action was taken to increase instruction in (a) specific approaches to interpretation that have established currency in the discipline, such as feminism or new historicism and (b) terminology and techniques of formal analysis at a complex level. This instruction took various forms, including increased readings, short reading response essays, and presentations on specific methodologies.

In AY 2018-19, the target was not met, as 58 out of 63 (92%) student projects were judged competent or higher in their ability to analyze and interpret evidence from a variety of texts. The AY 2018-2019 results showed no improvement over AY 2017-2018, despite increased instruction in established methodologies. However, substantially more assignments were assessed in AY 2018-2019 (63) versus AY 2017-2018 (37). The reason for this lack of change is the greater number of assignments assessing SLO 3.1, combined with a new, higher target. Further action will be taken to increase instruction in (a) specific approaches to interpretation that have established currency in the discipline, such as feminism and new historicism and (b) terminology and techniques of formal analysis at a complex level.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AY 2018-2019 and in conjunction with faculty drive for continuous improvement, further actions will be taken to sustain and advance students' ability to use established methodologies in the discipline. In 2019-2020 courses will be further refined to increase instruction in (a) specific approaches to interpretation that have established currency in the discipline, such as feminism and new historicism and (b) terminology and techniques of formal analysis at a complex level. Because of the lack of improvement, faculty will keep the target at 95% of student work receiving a score of competent or higher on the *Rubric for English Major Writing* for AY 2019-2020.

SLO 4. Engagement with social and literary history. Students in the English BA program will engage with social and literary history. While ideally, we want students to have a sense of how social and literary history are reciprocal, this outcome may appear as engagement with *either* social history *or* literary history.

Measure 4.1 (Direct – Knowledge)

On an annual basis, a sample number of research papers and/or projects from all English courses taught that year will be evaluated by a panel of faculty members, using the standardized *Assessment Rubric for English Major Writing* (attached). The writing

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will be evaluated to determine if students can demonstrate a basic knowledge of social and/or literary history. At least 98% of students sampled will score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Finding: Target was not met.

Analysis: In AY 2017-18, the target was met, as 52 out of 54 (96%) student projects were judged competent or higher in their ability to engage with social and literary history. This represented a 2% increase from the previous year. Increased instruction in social and literary history was the reason for this increase. Based on the analysis of these results, and to further aid students in their ability to demonstrate a basic knowledge of social and/or literary history, faculty increased instruction in both social and literary history and the way these contexts are reciprocal. This instruction took various forms, including increased readings, short reading response essays, longer essays, video essays, and presentations.

In AY 2018-19, the target was not met, as 44 out of 47 (94%) student projects were judged competent or higher in their ability to engage with social and literary history. This represents a 2% decrease from the previous year. Ineffective instruction in social and literary history is the reason for this increase. Further action will be taken to develop effective instruction in both social and literary history and the way these contexts are reciprocal.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AY 2018-2019 results, and in conjunction with faculty drive for continuous improvement, in 2019-2020 further actions will be taken to sustain and advance students' ability to demonstrate a basic knowledge of social and/or literary history. Courses will be further refined to increase instruction in both social and literary history and the way these contexts are reciprocal. Because of the decline, the target will remain at 98% of student work receiving a score of competent or higher on the *Rubric for English Major Writing* for AY 2018-2019.

SLO 5. Engagement with genre and form. Students in the English BA program will engage with genre and form. For literature, film, and folklore papers, this outcome requires explicit uses of the terminology or concepts of genre or form, or creative imitations of a specific genre or form. For those students who take creative writing and filmmaking courses, this outcome may appear as implicit engagement, in the creative work itself, with generic and formal conventions, as for example the general generic categories of poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, and screenwriting; the finer distinctions among, say, prose poem, flash fiction, short story, novella, and novel; specific poetic verse forms such as the sonnet, villanelle, or free verse; modes of fiction such as magical realism or psychological realism; or structural conventions such as linear narrative or experimental narratives that employ a variety of discourses. This outcome also pertains to electronic media-specific composition and design skills, for example, composition for web pages, including effective paragraph length, linking, scannable prose, use of keywords, alignment; proximity, repetition, contrast and color, branding, ease of navigation, clarity and choice of visuals, font, and other multimedia.

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Measure 5.1 (Direct – Knowledge)

On an annual basis, a sample number of research papers and/or projects from all English courses taught that year will be evaluated by a panel of faculty members, using the standardized *Assessment Rubric for English Major Writing* (attached). The writing will be evaluated to determine if students can demonstrate a basic knowledge of fundamental principles of genre and form in the context of a given course. At least 100% of students sampled will score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Findings: Target was met.

Analysis: In AY 2017-18, the target was met, as 36 out of 37 (97%) student projects sampled were judged competent or higher in their ability to demonstrate a basic knowledge of fundamental principles of genre and form in the context of a given course. This represented an 11% increase from the previous year. Increased instruction in genre and form was the reason for this increase. To further aid students in their engagement with genre and form, faculty increased instruction to emphasize explicit uses of the terminology and concepts of genre or form and creative imitations of a specific genre or form. This instruction took various forms, including writing assignments that specifically required students to engage with a specific genre, reading assignments from a variety of genres, and assignments that allowed students to produce texts in a genre of their choosing.

In AY 2018-19, the target was met, as 54 out of 54 (100%) student projects were judged competent or higher in their ability to demonstrate a basic knowledge of fundamental principles of genre and form in the context of a given course. This represents a 3% increase from the previous year. Increased instruction in genre and form are the reason for this increase. Further action will be taken to emphasize explicit uses of the terminology or concepts of genre or form and creative imitations of a specific genre or form.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AY 2018-2019 results, and in conjunction with faculty drive for continuous improvement, in 2019-2020 further actions will be taken to sustain and advance students' ability to demonstrate a basic knowledge of fundamental principles of genre and form in the context of a given course. Courses will be further refined to increase instruction in explicit uses of the terminology or concepts of genre or form and creative imitations of a specific genre or form. Because of the improvement, faculty will be setting the new target at 85% of student work receiving a score of competent-to-strong or higher on the *Rubric for English Major Writing* for AY 2019-2020.

SLO 6. Effective writing. Students in the English BA program will demonstrate effective writing. Students will demonstrate the general skills of college-level exposition developed to some degree of sophistication, as evident in the clarity, precision, fluidity, and aptness of sentence-level grammar, mechanics, and word choice; as well as in higher-level structural flexibility of sentences and paragraphs. For those students who

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take creative writing and courses, this outcome also involves the effective rendering of poetic lines, poetic stanzas, and dialogue. For students completing professional writing projects with a practical emphasis and is a measure of the projects' rhetorical recognition of their specific audiences, including word choice, tone, selection of evidence, organization, and style (e.g., creative or traditional). This outcome also involves the production of active, concise, engaging prose in clearly delineated chunks in professional writing assignments.

Measure 6.1 (Direct – Skill)

On an annual basis, a sample number of research papers and/or projects from all English courses taught that year will be evaluated by a panel of faculty members, using the standardized *Assessment Rubric for English Major Writing* (attached). The writing will be evaluated to determine if students can demonstrate a basic ability to compose effective writing. At least 90% of students sampled will score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Findings: Target was met.

Analysis: In AY 2017-18, the target was met, as 75 out of 86 (87%) student projects were judged competent or higher in effective writing. This represented a 1% increase from the previous year. Increased instruction in effective writing was the reason for this increase. Based on the analysis of these results, faculty increased instruction in the skills of college-level exposition, as evident in the clarity, precision, fluidity, and aptness of sentence-level grammar, mechanics, and word choice; as well as in higher-level structural flexibility of sentences and paragraphs. This instruction took various forms, including writing exercises, draft assignments, peer-review sessions, and one-on-one feedback sessions.

In AY 2018-19, the target was met, as 117 out of 121 (97%) student projects were judged competent or higher in effective writing. This represents a 10% increase from the previous year. Increased instruction in effective writing is the reason for this increase. Further action will be taken to emphasize the skills of college-level exposition, as evident in the clarity, precision, fluidity, and aptness of sentence-level grammar, mechanics, and word choice; as well as in higher-level structural flexibility of sentences and paragraphs.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AY 2018-2019 results, and in conjunction with faculty drive for continuous improvement, in 2019-2020 further actions will be taken to sustain and advance students' use of effective writing. Courses will be further refined to increase instruction in the skills of college-level exposition, as evident in the clarity, precision, fluidity, and aptness of sentence-level grammar, mechanics, and word choice; as well as in higher-level structural flexibility of sentences and paragraphs. Because of the improvement, faculty will be setting our new target at 98% of student work receiving a score of competent or higher on the *Rubric for English Major Writing* for AY 2019-2020.

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SLO 7. Establishment of sound, applicable arguments. Students in the English BA program will establish sound, applicable arguments. In literature, film studies, and folklore courses, students will clearly articulate a substantive thesis, for which they will provide a logically reasoned and organized defense. For those students who take professional writing courses, the argument may take various practical forms, such as recommendations for a client, a personal statement of qualifications, or carefully selected primary evidence for a portfolio. For such practical arguments, this outcome includes the feasibility of the argument.

Measure 7.1 (Direct – Skill)

On an annual basis, a sample number of research papers and/or projects from all English courses taught that year will be evaluated by a panel of faculty members, using the standardized *Assessment Rubric for English Major Writing* (attached). The writing will be evaluated to determine if students can demonstrate a basic ability to craft a sound argument. At least 90% of students sampled will score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Findings: Target was not met.

Analysis: In AY 2017-18, the target was met, as 59 out of 67 (88%) student projects were judged competent or higher in their ability to establish sound, applicable arguments. This represented a 10% increase from the previous year. Increased instruction in developing and using sound, applicable arguments was the reason for this increase. The analysis of these results supports increased instruction in how to clearly articulate a substantive thesis and provide a logically reasoned and organized defense across courses in our major. This instruction took various forms, including thesis-writing exercises, quizzes to identify strong versus weak thesis statements, draft assignments, peer-review sessions, and one-on-one feedback sessions.

In AY 2018-19, the target was not met, as 66 out of 77 (86%) student projects were judged competent or higher in their ability to establish sound, applicable arguments. This represents a 2% decrease from the previous year. Ineffective instruction in developing and using sound, applicable arguments is the reason for this decrease. Further action will be taken to emphasize how to clearly articulate a substantive thesis and provide a logically reasoned and organized defense across courses in the curriculum.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AY 2018-2019 results, and in conjunction with faculty drive for continuous improvement, in 2019-2020 further actions will be taken to sustain and advance students' ability to establish sound, applicable arguments. Courses will be further refined to increase instruction in how to clearly articulate a substantive thesis and provide a logically reasoned and organized defense. Because of the decline, the target will remain at 90% of student work receiving a score of competent or higher on the *Rubric for English Major Writing* for AY 2019-2020.

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SLO 8. Relevant use of sources. Students in the English BA program will use sources beyond the one of primary focus to establish relevant support for their argumentation. These sources may be assigned by an instructor specifically for an assignment, ones assigned earlier in the course, or ones the student knows from another course, in addition to those discovered through research.

Measure 8.1 (Direct – Skill)

On an annual basis, a sample number of research papers and/or projects from all English courses taught that year will be evaluated by a panel of faculty members, using the standardized *Assessment Rubric for English Major Writing* (attached). The writing will be evaluated to determine if students can demonstrate a basic ability to identify and incorporate relevant sources. At least 90% of students sampled will score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Finding: Target was not met.

Analysis: In AY 2017-18, the target was met, as 49 out of 56 (88%) student projects were judged competent or higher in their ability to identify and incorporate relevant sources. This represented a 22% increase from the previous year. Increased instruction in the relevant use of sources was the reason for this increase. Based on the analysis of these results, and to further aid students in their use of relevant sources, faculty increased instruction in the research process and the use of sources beyond the one of primary focus to establish relevant support for their argumentation. This instruction took various forms, including worksheets on identifying relevant sources, presentations on sources relevant to a course, resource posts, and overall increased source use requirements.

In AY 2018-19, the target was not met, as 64 out of 72 (89%) student projects were judged competent or higher in their ability to identify and incorporate relevant sources. This represents a 1% increase from the previous year. Increased instruction in the relevant use of sources is the reason for this increase. Further action will be taken to emphasize the research process and the use of sources beyond the one of primary focus to establish relevant support for their argumentation.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AY 2018-2019 results, and in conjunction with faculty drive for continuous improvement, in 2019-2020 further actions will be taken to sustain and advance students' ability to identify and incorporate relevant sources. Courses will be further refined to increase instruction in the research process and the use of sources beyond the one of primary focus to establish relevant support for their argumentation. Because of the improvement, but failure to attain the target, the target will remain at 90% of student work receiving a score of competent or higher on the *Rubric for English Major Writing* for AY 2019-2020.

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SLO 9. Independent, relevant research. Students in the English BA program will conduct independent research to establish relevant support for their argumentation. This outcome requires student-directed research, usually for assignments that explicitly require such research. For those students who take professional writing, folklore, and film courses, this outcome may appear in other forms than traditional library research, such as interviews, investigations of companies or individuals, or comparison of websites, films, or versions of folktales.

Measure 9.1 (Direct – Skill)

On an annual basis, a sample number of research papers and/or projects from all English courses taught that year will be evaluated by a panel of faculty members, using the standardized *Assessment Rubric for English Major Writing* (attached). The writing will be evaluated to determine if students can demonstrate a basic ability to conduct independent, relevant research. At least 82% of students sampled will score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Findings: Target was met.

Analysis: In AY 2017-18, the target was not met, as 33 out of 42 (79%) student projects were judged competent or higher in their ability to conduct independent, relevant research. However, this represented a 14% increase from the previous year, and was only 1% short of the target. Increased instruction in conducting independent, relevant research was the reason for this increase. Based on the analysis of these results, and to further aid students in their use of research, faculty increased instruction in the research process and how to conduct independent research to establish relevant support for students' argumentation. This instruction took various forms, including overviews of the library's resources, database use assignments, and annotated bibliographies.

In AY 2018-19, the target was met, as 56 out of 62 (90%) student projects were judged competent or higher in their ability to conduct independent, relevant research. This represents an 11% increase from the previous year. Increased instruction in conducting independent, relevant research is the reason for this increase. Further action will be taken to emphasize the research process and how to conduct independent research to establish relevant support for students' argumentation.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AY 2018-2019 results, and in conjunction with faculty drive for continuous improvement, in 2019-2020 further actions will be taken to sustain and advance students' ability to conduct independent, relevant research. Courses will be further refined to increase instruction in the research process and how to conduct independent research to establish relevant support for students' argumentation. Furthermore, undergraduate faculty will participate in professional training that directs them in how to integrate increased independent research in their course and assignment design. Because of the improvement, faculty will be setting the

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new target at 92% of student work receiving a score of competent or higher on the *Rubric for English Major Writing* for AY 2019-2020.

SLO 10. Documentation of sources. Students in the English BA program will document resources accurately, consistently, and fully. This outcome extends to the documentation of all sources in any paper that requires documentation (that is, in more than just research papers). For those students who take professional writing courses, this document extends to image credits and linking to websites; it does not necessarily involve a formal references page.

Measure 10.1 (Direct – Skill)

On an annual basis, a sample number of research papers and/or projects from all English courses taught that year will be evaluated by a panel of faculty members, using the standardized *Assessment Rubric for English Major Writing* (attached). The writing will be evaluated to determine if students can demonstrate a basic ability to document sources in the citation style specified by the professor. At least 83% of students sampled will score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Findings: Target was met.

Analysis: In AY 2017-18, the target was met, as 48 out of 60 (80%) student projects were judged competent or higher in their ability to document sources in the citation style specified by the professor. This represented a 27% increase from the previous year. Increased instruction in how to document sources was the reason for this increase. Based on the analysis of these results, and to further aid students in their use of textual evidence, faculty increased instruction in the importance of citation and how to document resources accurately, consistently, and fully. This instruction took various forms, including citation management software, basic MLA and APA instruction, citation worksheets, and annotated bibliographies.

In AY 2018-19, the target was met, as 62 out of 70 (89%) student projects were judged competent or higher in their ability to document sources in the citation style specified by the professor. This represents a 9% increase from the previous year. Increased instruction in how to document sources is the reason for this increase. Further action will be taken to emphasize the importance of citation and how to document resources accurately, consistently, and fully.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AY 2018-2019 results, and in conjunction with faculty drive for continuous improvement, in 2019-2020 further actions will be taken to sustain and advance students' ability to document sources in the citation style specified by the professor. Courses will be further refined to increase instruction in the importance of citation and how to document resources accurately, consistently, and fully. Because of the improvement, faculty will be setting the new target at 90% of student work receiving a score of competent or higher on the *Rubric for English Major Writing* for AY 2018-2019.

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SLO 11. Critical thinking. Students in the English BA program will explore and render insight in argument, reasoning, and methodology. For those students who take creative writing and filmmaking courses, this outcome requires an exploration of profound and complex themes, independent of creativity and originality.

Measure 11.1 (Direct – Skill)

On an annual basis, a sample number of research papers and/or projects from all English courses taught that year will be evaluated by a panel of faculty members, using the standardized *Assessment Rubric for English Major Writing* (attached). The writing will be evaluated to determine if students can demonstrate a basic ability to use critical thinking. At least 92% of students sampled will score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Findings: Target was met.

Analysis: In AY 2017-18, the target was met, as 71 out of 80 (89%) student projects were judged competent or higher in their ability to use critical thinking. This represented a 4% increase from the previous year. Increased instruction in critical thinking was the reason for this increase. Based on the analysis of these results, and to further aid students in their use of critical thinking, faculty increased instruction in how to explore and render insight in argument, reasoning, and methodology. This instruction took various forms, including exercises asking students to identify their assumptions about a specific text, exercises on suspending your beliefs, discussions of ethical dilemmas related to the texts being taught, and discussions of how to react when your way of thinking is challenged.

In AY 2018-19, the target was met, as 106 out of 114 (93%) student projects were judged competent or higher in their ability to use critical thinking. This represents a 4% increase from the previous year. Increased instruction in critical thinking is the reason for this increase. Further action will be taken to emphasize how to explore and render insight in argument, reasoning, and methodology.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AY 2018-2019 results, and in conjunction with faculty drive for continuous improvement, in 2019-2020 further actions will be taken to sustain and advance students' ability to use critical thinking. Courses will be further refined to increase instruction in how to explore and render insight in argument, reasoning, and methodology. Because of the improvement, faculty will be setting the new target at 95% of student work receiving a score of competent or higher on the *Rubric for English Major Writing* for AY 2018-2019.

SLO 12. Creativity and originality. Students in the English BA program will display creativity and originality in argument, reasoning, or methodology. For those students who take creative writing or filmmaking courses, this outcome pertains to creativity in a

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range of items including fresh concepts, unique ideas, novel approaches, unusual perspectives, surprising images, playful language usage, and innovative forms.

Measure 12.1 (Direct – Skill)

On an annual basis, a sample number of research papers and/or projects from all English courses taught that year will be evaluated by a panel of faculty members, using the standardized *Assessment Rubric for English Major Writing* (attached). The writing will be evaluated to determine if students can demonstrate creativity and originality. At least 98% of students sampled will score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Finding: Target was not met.

Analysis: In AY 2017-18, the target was met, as 60 out of 67 (95%) student projects were judged competent or higher in their ability to demonstrate creativity and originality. This represented an 8% increase from the previous year. Increased instruction in developing creativity and originality was the reason for this increase. Based on the analysis of these results, and to further aid students in their use of creativity and originality, faculty increased instruction in the development of both (a) creativity and originality in argument, reasoning, and methodology and (b) fresh concepts, unique ideas, novel approaches, unusual perspectives, surprising images, playful language usage, and innovative forms. This instruction took various forms, including brainstorming activities, free writing, writing prompts, and formal challenges (or obstacles) in creative assignments.

In AY 2017-18, the target was not met, as 87 out of 91 (96%) student projects were judged competent or higher in their ability to demonstrate creativity and originality. This represents a 1% increase from the previous year. Increased instruction in developing creativity and originality is the reason for this increase. Further action will be taken to emphasize the development of both (a) creativity and originality in argument, reasoning, and methodology and (b) fresh concepts, unique ideas, novel approaches, unusual perspectives, surprising images, playful language usage, and innovative forms.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the AY 2018-2019 results, and in conjunction with faculty drive for continuous improvement, in 2019-2020 further actions will be taken to sustain and advance students' ability to demonstrate creativity and originality. Courses will be further refined to increase instruction in the development of both (a) creativity and originality in argument, reasoning, and methodology and (b) fresh concepts, unique ideas, novel approaches, unusual perspectives, surprising images, playful language usage, and innovative forms. Because of the improvement, but the failure to meet the target, the target will remain at 98% of student work receiving a score of competent or higher on the *Rubric for English Major Writing* for AY 2019-2020.

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Findings

Student Learning Outcomes:		Number of Assignments Targeting SLO	Weak (1)	Weak to Competent (2)	Competent (3)	Competent to Strong (4)	Strong (5)
1	Analysis and interpretation of evidence	97	1	5	26	40	25
2	Application of theory	61	1	8	13	21	18
3	Application of established methodologies	63	0	5	10	20	28
4	Engagement with social and literary history	47	0	3	13	22	9
5	Engagement with genre and form	54	0	0	7	10	37
6	Effective writing	121	2	3	35	38	44
7	Establishment of sound, applicable arguments	77	0	11	18	28	20
8	Relevant use of sources	72	5	3	13	26	25
9	Independent, relevant research	62	4	2	5	15	36
10	Documentation of sources	70	6	2	12	10	40
11	Critical Thinking	114	0	8	32	49	25
12	Creativity and originality	91	0	4	29	32	26

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Student Learning Outcomes:		Number of Assignments Assessed	Number of Students Scoring Competent (3) or Higher	Percentage of Students Scoring Competent (3) or Higher
1	Analysis and interpretation of evidence	97	91	94
2	Application of theory	61	52	85
3	Application of established methodologies	63	58	92
4	Engagement with social and literary history	47	44	93
5	Engagement with genre and form	54	54	100
6	Effective writing	121	117	97
7	Establishment of sound, applicable arguments	77	66	86
8	Relevant use of sources	72	64	89
9	Independent, relevant research	62	56	90
10	Documentation of sources	70	62	89
11	Critical Thinking	114	106	93
12	Creativity and originality	91	87	96

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Comprehensive summary of key evidence of improvements based on analysis of results

Changes implemented in AY2018-2019 as a result of AY2017-18 data analysis:

- Increased number and diversity of writing assignments including textual explication, rhetorical analysis, assignments that specifically required students to engage with a specific genre, assignments that allowed students to produce texts in a genre of their choosing, thesis-writing exercises, short reading responses, video essays, annotated bibliographies, brainstorming activities, free-writing, writing prompts, and formal challenges (in creative assignments), which has improved students' ability to write and communicate effectively in a variety of situations and genres.
- Use of quizzes to identify strong versus weak thesis statements ensures student success as they matriculate through the program and in all other written assignments.
- Increased instruction on the library's resources, database use assignments, and instruction in how to document sources and related worksheets, posts, and presentations on identifying relevant sources. This change has strengthened students' research and documentation skills.
- Presentations on specific theories, theorists, specific methodologies, and identifying relevant sources, which has improved students' ability to identify and apply essential theories and methods in the discipline of English studies.
- Increased the variety of genres that reading assignments are drawn from, which ensures students' ability to recognize and replicate different forms of writing.
- Increased critical thinking exercises asking students to identify their assumptions about a specific text, exercises on suspending your beliefs, discussions of ethical dilemmas related to the texts being taught, and discussions of how to react when their way of thinking is challenged. This instruction ensures student success as they matriculate through the program and enter the workforce.
- Increased student feedback in peer-review sessions, one-on-one instructor feedback sessions, and advising, which builds consistent improvement in student work and overall grades.
- Implemented changes to the professional writing concentration requirements and added a new concentration in creative writing. Based on the AY 2017-2018 performance, student demand, and industry expectations, faculty determined that professional writing students would be required to complete more hours focused on argumentative writing and rhetoric and develop a concentration solely for creative writing. Faculty expect that these changes will result in even more fully

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developed skills related to all of the SLOs as well as a greater breadth and depth of content knowledge in our writing students.

- Hired two new tenure-track faculty members, one in rhetoric and composition, and one in professional writing, who both began teaching in fall 2018. Faculty are now able to offer more specialized courses in composition and digital studies, while also drawing on these faculty members' expertise to improve writing instruction across our curriculum.
- Hired one new tenure-track faculty member in British literature to the 18th century, to begin in fall 2019. This hire will replace a retiring faculty and will ensure that we can continue to offer more specialized courses in British literature and cultural studies.

Program improvements based on the changes above:

- Student achievements of targets for Measures 5, 6, 9, 10, and 11, and improvement in Measures 1, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 in AY 2018-2019 demonstrate the success of the major regarding the established SLOs.
- Revision to the coursework across the major shows evidence of continued success, particularly regarding Measures 9 and 10, which received the lowest scores in AY 2017-2018 and experienced substantial increases in AY 2018-2019.
- Comparison of AY 2017-2018 and AY 2018-2019 demonstrates that curricular changes to the upper-level undergraduate courses support students in developing their skills of analysis, interpretation, research, argumentation, synthesis, and creativity across the disciplines within our major.
- Targets for measures 5, 6, 9, 10, and 11 have been adjusted higher for AY 2019-2020. No changes have been made to the remaining targets.

Plan of action moving forward

The dedication to persistent improvement, as well as the shortcoming in Measure 9, have led faculty to the following refinements to the curriculum:

- Increased focus on all SLOs in ENGL 2070, the introductory course taken by students in all concentrations in our major. This will instill the importance of these skills at the beginning of each student's degree program.
- Faculty will adapt existing assignments and create new assignments to target the SLOs relevant to a given course. Faculty teaching within each concentration will undergo professional development related to best practices for connecting the SLOs to their discipline.

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Because the targets for SLOs 1,2, 3, 4, 7, 8, and 12 were not met, faculty will receive additional training in these areas. Faculty will also receive more feedback regarding assignment design and classroom instruction as it pertains to teaching and assessing these 7 SLOs.

The program will also establish more regular meetings of the undergraduate faculty, which will enable additional discussion of our measures and how our program might reassess our target goals to further raise expectations and promote evidence of improvement.