

Graduate Certificate in Writing for Business, Industry, and Technology (WBIT)

Program: Graduate Certificate (GC) in Writing for Business, Industry, and Technology (WBIT)

College: Arts and Sciences

Prepared by: Thomas Reynolds, Program Coordinator **Date:** May 14, 2019

Approved by: James J. Mischler, III, Department Head **Date:** June 10, 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). 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.

Graduate English Major Mission Statement: The Graduate Program of the Department of English, Foreign Languages and Cultural Studies is a dynamic, student-oriented program focused on rigorously preparing students to achieve in diverse fields. The graduate program focuses on developing, providing, and supporting innovative, responsive, and accessible graduate education of the highest level. 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 Graduate Program offers its students access to creative, critical, and compositional skills, providing them invaluable versatility in a rapidly-changing market.

Purpose: The purpose of the Graduate Certificate in Writing for Business, Industry, and Technology (WBIT) is to equip students with the knowledge and abilities necessary to work in professional careers as writers, editors, and researchers, as well as related careers in business, government, non-profits, and other professions in which communication of technical information is a central concern. Our program focuses on technical, business, and scientific writing as it occurs in professional settings. In this way, the program focuses not only on aspiring technical writers but also workers in technical fields who regularly communicate technical information to clients, business partners and investors, and the general public.

Methodology:

1. The assessor(s) will electronically collect from instructors one written assignment/project from each student enrolled in all courses taught in the WBIT program*.
2. The assessor(s) will assess the student writing using the rubric appended to this document.
3. The assessor(s) will electronically collect data from the indirect assessment tool (survey, appended to this document) that is provided to each student enrolled in all courses taught in the WBIT program*.
4. The assessor(s) will analyze the data from the rubrics and the surveys to determine whether students have met measurable outcomes.
5. Faculty will meet during the fall 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 coordinator of the Graduate Certificate in Writing for Business, Industry, and Technology, 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.

* **Courses:** ENGL 5060: Intercultural Communication, ENGL 5220: Technical Writing, ENGL 5230: Advanced Technical Writing and Editing, ENGL 5280: General Composition Theory, ENGL 6540: Computers and Composition, ENGL 6560: Digital

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Culture: Theory and Practice, ENGL 6880: Writing for Business, Industry, and Technology, ENGL 6890: Grant Writing

Student Learning Outcomes.

SLO 1. Demonstrate fluency in producing clear, correct, and concise language.

Workplace writing is transactional—that is, it is designed to help people accomplish tasks, whether those tasks are mechanical processes or decision making. Clear, correct, concise language is characteristic of workplace writing style. Style is the choices that writers make about what language to use as they communicate information. Students will learn and apply basic literacy in grammar and mechanical principles as well as other conventions of communication in technical fields.

Measure 1.1 (Direct – Skill)

At the end of each semester, a panel of faculty members will evaluate a sample number of research papers and/or projects from all WBIT courses taught that year, using the standardized *Assessment Rubric for English Major Writing* (attached). The panel will determine how well students demonstrate fluency in producing clear, correct, and concise language. At least 75% of students sampled will score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Course Name (# of students)	Methodology	Target	Term
ENGL 5220 (2)	Project	75%	Fall 2018
ENGL 5280 (1)	Research Paper	75%	Fall 2018
ENGL 6560 (4)	Project	75%	Spring 2019

Findings:

AY 2017-2018 3/3 student assignments (100%) scored 3+. Target was met.
AY 2018-2019 7/7 student assignments (100%) scored 3+. Target was met.

Analysis: In AY 2017-2018 the 70% target was met, as the 3 students who completed their projects and papers scored a mean of 4.67 out of 5. In pursuit of on-going improvement, the Department identified potential for students to focus on “conciseness” as a key component to technical style. Focusing on conciseness forces additional attention to other key aspects of style, leading to language that is “clear” and “correct.” Faculty were encouraged to spend additional class time on “conciseness” in all WBIT courses. Also based on this success, the Department revised expectations so that it was expected that at least 75% of students sampled would score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

In AY 2018-2019 the target continued to be met with 100% of students scoring 3 or higher on the evaluation, as the 7 students who completed their projects and papers scored a mean of 4.71 out of 5. This slight improvement suggests that increased

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attention to “conciseness” in WBIT courses resulted in improved attention to technical style. The initiative to increase attention to “conciseness” will be maintained and further emphasized in the coming year.

Because increased attention to “conciseness” led to a marked improvement for Measure 1.1, WBIT faculty will participate in professional training to further emphasize this initiative.

Because the findings demonstrate that our program met the target for SLO 1 through Measure 1.1, the Department will establish a more rigorous target to maximize the benefit of assessment in AY 2019-2020.

Decision: Consistent findings from both AY 2017-2018 and AY 2018-2019 provide evidence that the WBIT program successfully fulfills SLO 1 through Measure 1.1, with average scores of 4.67 and 4.71 respectively. In AY 2018-2019, increased attention to conciseness led to marked student improvement. However, in the spirit of continued improvement, this initiative will be enhanced through faculty training in technical style, particularly focused on conciseness. Furthermore, based on the analysis of these results the Department will revise expectations so that 80% of students will be expected to score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation in AY 2019-2020.

Measure 1.2 (Indirect – Attitude)

At the end of each semester, the program will assess students in WBIT courses with a survey, including a question that will state, "In my WBIT course(s) I was provided graduate-level instruction in clear, correct, and concise language and provided appropriate opportunities to practice employing that instruction as a writer and editor." Respondents will respond on a Likert scale: strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree. At least 75% of students will respond that they “strongly agree” or “agree” with the statement.

Course Name (# of students)	Methodology	Target	Term
ENGL 5220 (0)	Survey	75%	Fall 2018
ENGL 5280 (1)	Survey	75%	Fall 2018
ENGL 6560 (1)	Survey	75%	Spring 2019

Findings:

AY 2017-2018 3/3 student responses (100%) were favorable. Target met.

AY 2018-2019 2/2 student responses (100%) were favorable. Target met.

Analysis: In AY 2017-2018 the 70% target was met, as the 3 students surveyed reported that they “strongly agreed” with the statement, for an arithmetic mean of 5.0 out of 5. Because faculty were clearly addressing these issues in courses and students were reporting having received instruction and opportunity to practice, the WBIT program was clearly meeting and exceeding expectations. In the spirit of improvement,

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faculty identified “conciseness” as the central tenet of technical style and were encouraged to emphasize it in their courses. Additionally, the Department revised expectations so that it was expected that at least 75% of students sampled would respond that they “strongly agree” or “agree” with the statement on the survey question.

In AY 2018-2019 the target continued to be met with 100% of students responding favorably on the survey question, as the 2 students who responded to the survey instrument reported that they “strongly agreed” with the statement, for a mean of 5 out of 5. Students clearly continue to feel that they are receiving ample instruction and practice in technical style through their WBIT coursework. However, only 2 out of 7 students completed the survey instrument, so action will be taken to increase student completion of the survey instrument.

The fact that the mean score for Measure 1.2 was consistent from AY 2017-2018 to AY 2018-2019 provides evidence that faculty are meeting and exceeding student expectations in this area; however, the severe reduction in student participation in the WBIT survey at the end of the semester is cause for alarm.

Because the findings demonstrate that our program met the target for SLO 1 through Measure 1.2, the Department will establish a more rigorous target to maximize the benefit of assessment in AY 2019-2020.

Decision: Identical perfect findings from both AY 2017-2018 and AY 2018-2019 provide evidence that the WBIT program successfully fulfills SLO 1 through Measure 1.2, with average scores of 5.0 out of 5. In AY 2018-2019, increased attention to conciseness could not be measured as student response was identical to the previous year. However, in the spirit of continued improvement, this initiative will be enhanced through faculty training in technical style, particularly focused on conciseness. Furthermore, based on the analysis of these results the Department will revise expectations so that 80% of students will be expected to score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation in AY 2019-2020. More significantly, the survey tool, which is currently administered through Survey Monkey, will be administered through NSU’s MyNSU system in each class to encourage student participation.

SLO 2. Recognize and apply principles and processes for communicating about technical subjects to diverse audiences. Audience is always an important consideration for technical communicators. Whether the workplace writing is primarily instructional or persuasive, technical writers always design documents to help readers achieve their goals. It is also important to remember that workplace writers often must consider multiple audiences—primary audiences such as technicians or customers who will use the document, secondary audiences such as federal regulators who will be guided by the document, and even tertiary audiences such as future employees who may use the document as a model for their own writing. Students will research, identify, and think analytically about social, global, economic, political, environmental, and audience issues as they affect technical projects.

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Measure 2.1 (Direct – Skill)

At the end of each semester, a panel of faculty members will evaluate a sample number of research papers and/or projects from all WBIT courses taught that year, using the standardized *Assessment Rubric for English Major Writing* (attached). The panel will determine how well students can recognize and apply principles and processes for communicating about technical subjects to diverse audiences. At least 75% of students sampled will score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Course Name (# of students)	Methodology	Target	Term
ENGL 5220 (2)	Project	75%	Fall 2018
ENGL 5280 (1)	Research Paper	75%	Fall 2018
ENGL 6560 (4)	Project	75%	Spring 2019

Findings:

AY 2017-2018 3/3 student assignments (100%) scored 3+. Target met.
AY 2018-2019 7/7 student assignments (100%) scored 3+. Target met.

Analysis: In AY 2017-2018 the 70% target was met, as the 3 students who completed their projects and papers scored a mean of 4.67 out of 5. In pursuit of on-going improvement, the Department identified potential for students to focus on “audience” as a key component to technical rhetoric. Focusing on audience helps students to understand how rhetorical choices should be driven by “user” needs, a major concept in technical communication. Faculty were encouraged to spend additional class time on “audience” in all WBIT courses. Also based on this success, the Department revised expectations so that it was expected that at least 75% of students sampled would score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

In AY 2018-2019 the target continued to be met with 100% of students scoring 3 or higher on the evaluation, as the 7 students who completed their projects and papers scored a mean of 4.71 out of 5. This slight improvement suggests that increased attention to “audience” in WBIT courses resulted in improved attention to rhetorical concerns in student projects. The initiative to increase attention to “audience” will be maintained and further emphasized in the coming year.

Because increased attention to “audience” led to a marked improvement for Measure 2.1, WBIT faculty will participate in professional training to further emphasize this initiative.

Because the findings demonstrate that our program met the target for SLO 1 through Measure 2.1, the Department will establish a more rigorous target to maximize the benefit of assessment in AY 2019-2020.

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Decision: Consistent findings from both AY 2017-2018 and AY 2018-2019 provide evidence that the WBIT program successfully fulfills SLO 1 through Measure 2.1, with average scores of 4.67 and 4.71 respectively. In AY 2018-2019, increased attention to audience led to marked student improvement. However, in the spirit of continued improvement, this initiative will be enhanced through faculty training in rhetoric, particularly focused on audience. Furthermore, based on the analysis of these results the Department will revise expectations so that 80% of students will be expected to score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation in AY 2019-2020.

Measure 2.2 (Indirect – Attitude)

At the end of each semester, the program will sample students in WBIT courses with a survey, including a question that will state, "In my WBIT course(s) I was provided graduate-level instruction in issues of audience related to technical communication and provided appropriate opportunities to practice applying that instruction in my own writing." Respondents will respond on a Likert scale: strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree. At least 75% of students will respond that they "strongly agree" or "agree" with the statement.

Course Name (# of students)	Methodology	Target	Term
ENGL 5220 (0)	Survey	75%	Fall 2018
ENGL 5280 (1)	Survey	75%	Fall 2018
ENGL 6560 (1)	Survey	75%	Spring 2019

Findings:

AY 2017-2018 3/3 student responses (100%) were favorable. Target met.
AY 2018-2019 2/2 student responses (100%) were favorable. Target met.

Analysis: In AY 2017-2018 the 70% target was met, as the 3 students surveyed reported that they "strongly agreed" or "agreed" with the statement, for an arithmetic mean of 4.67 out of 5. Because faculty were clearly addressing these issues in courses and students were reporting having received instruction and opportunity to practice, the WBIT program was clearly meeting and exceeding expectations. In the spirit of improvement, faculty identified "audience" as the central tenet of technical rhetoric and were encouraged to emphasize it in their courses. Additionally, the Department revised expectations so that it was expected that at least 75% of students sampled would respond that they "strongly agree" or "agree" with the statement on the survey question.

In AY 2018-2019 the target continued to be met with 100% of students responding favorably on the survey question, as the 2 students who responded to the survey instrument reported that they "strongly agreed" or "agreed" with the statement, for a mean of 4.5 out of 5. Students clearly continue to feel that they are receiving ample instruction and practice in technical rhetoric through their WBIT coursework. However, only 2 out of 7 students completed the survey instrument, so action will be taken to

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increase student completion of the survey instrument. The slight dip in mean scores are likely the result of this decreased participation in the survey.

The fact that the mean score for Measure 2.2 was consistent from AY 2017-2018 to AY 2018-2019 provides evidence that faculty are meeting student expectations in this area; however, the severe reduction in student participation in the WBIT survey at the end of the semester is cause for alarm.

Because the findings demonstrate that our program met the target for SLO 2 through Measure 2.2, the Department will establish a more rigorous target to maximize the benefit of assessment in AY 2019-2020.

Decision: Consistent findings from both AY 2017-2018 and AY 2018-2019 provide evidence that the WBIT program successfully fulfills SLO 2 through Measure 2.2, with average scores of 4.67 and 4.5 out of 5 respectively. In AY 2018-2019, increased attention to audience could not be accurately measured as student response was like the previous year. However, in the spirit of continued improvement, this initiative will be enhanced through faculty training in technical rhetoric, particularly focused on audience. Furthermore, based on the analysis of these results the Department will revise expectations so that 80% of students will be expected to score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation in AY 2019-2020. More significantly, the survey tool, which is currently administered through Survey Monkey, will be administered through NSU's MyNSU system in each class to encourage student participation.

SLO 3. Demonstrate rhetorical literacy through selection of appropriate technologies, genres, and strategies in communication situations. Rhetoric provides an important framework for discussing workplace writing by recognizing that all writing is situated, and that consideration of specific situations provides writers with opportunities to be more effective by choosing appropriate approaches to those situations. Students will consider communication options and make effective choices about writing approach, genre, and technology based on a variety of writing scenarios.

Measure 3.1 (Direct – Skill)

At the end of each semester, a panel of faculty members will evaluate a sample number of research papers and/or projects from all WBIT courses taught that year, using the standardized *Assessment Rubric for English Major Writing* (attached). The panel will determine if students can demonstrate rhetorical literacy. At least 75% of students sampled will score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Course Name (# of students)	Methodology	Target	Term
ENGL 5220 (2)	Project	75%	Fall 2018
ENGL 5280 (1)	Research Paper	75%	Fall 2018

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ENGL 6560 (4)	Project	75%	Spring 2019
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Findings:

AY 2017-2018	3/3 student assignments (100%) scored 3+.	Target met.
AY 2018-2019	7/7 student assignments (100%) scored 3+.	Target met.

Analysis: In AY 2017-2018 the 70% target was met, as the 3 students who completed their projects and papers scored a mean of 5 out of 5. In pursuit of on-going improvement, the Department identified potential for students to focus on “context” as a key component to technical rhetoric. Focusing on context helps students to understand how technical communication takes place within different rhetorical situations, a major concept in technical communication. Faculty were encouraged to spend additional class time on “context” in all WBIT courses. Also based on this success, the Department revised expectations so that it was expected that at least 75% of students sampled would score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

In AY 2018-2019 the target continued to be met with 100% of students scoring 3 or higher on the evaluation, as the 7 students who completed their projects and papers scored a mean of 4.71 out of 5. This slight reduction in student success suggests that increased attention to “context” in WBIT courses may not have resulted in improved attention to rhetorical situation in student projects. It might be useful to analyze the concepts of “context” and “rhetorical situation” to identify a more specific and impactful focus for WBIT courses. “Genre” might be a better related concept for focus in WBIT courses, as genre choices are the result of careful consideration of context and situation.

Because increased attention to “context” did not lead to improvement for Measure 3.1, WBIT faculty will be encouraged to continue discussing “context” in their courses but focus on the practical implications of context through the concept of “genre.”

Because the findings demonstrate that our program met the target for SLO 3 through Measure 3.1, the Department will establish a more rigorous target to maximize the benefit of assessment in AY 2019-2020.

Decision: Consistent findings from both AY 2017-2018 and AY 2018-2019 provide evidence that the WBIT program successfully fulfills SLO 3 through Measure 3.1, with average scores of 5.0 and 4.71 respectively. In AY 2018-2019, increased attention to “context” did not lead to student improvement. For this reason, WBIT faculty will be encouraged to continue discussing “context” in their courses but focus on the practical implications of context through the concept of “genre,” as genre choices are the result of careful consideration of context and situation. Furthermore, based on the analysis of these results the Department will revise expectations so that 80% of students will be expected to score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation in AY 2019-2020.

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Measure 3.2 (Indirect – Attitude)

At the end of each semester, the program will sample students in WBIT courses with a survey, including a question that will state, "In my WBIT course(s) I was provided graduate-level instruction in rhetorical considerations related to technical communication and provided appropriate opportunities to practice applying that instruction in my own writing." Respondents will respond on a Likert scale: strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree. At least 75% of students will respond that they "strongly agree" or "agree" with the statement.

Course Name (# of students)	Methodology	Target	Term
ENGL 5220 (0)	Survey	75%	Fall 2018
ENGL 5280 (1)	Survey	75%	Fall 2018
ENGL 6560 (1)	Survey	75%	Spring 2019

Findings:

AY 2017-2018 3/3 student responses (100%) were favorable. Target met.

AY 2018-2019 2/2 student responses (100%) were favorable. Target met.

Analysis: In AY 2017-2018 the 70% target was met, as the 3 students surveyed reported that they "strongly agreed" or "agreed" with the statement, for an arithmetic mean of 4.67 out of 5. Because faculty were clearly addressing these issues in courses and students were reporting having received instruction and opportunity to practice, the WBIT program was clearly meeting expectations. In the spirit of improvement, faculty identified "context" as a central tenet of technical rhetoric and were encouraged to emphasize it in their courses. Additionally, the Department revised expectations so that it was expected that at least 75% of students sampled would respond that they "strongly agree" or "agree" with the statement on the survey question.

In AY 2018-2019 the target continued to be met with 100% of students responding favorably on the survey question, as the 2 students who responded to the survey instrument reported that they "strongly agreed" or "agreed" with the statement, for a mean of 4.5 out of 5. Students clearly continue to feel that they are receiving ample instruction and practice in technical rhetoric through their WBIT coursework. However, only 2 out of 7 students completed the survey instrument, so action will be taken to increase student completion of the survey instrument. The slight dip in mean scores are likely the result of this decreased participation in the survey but taken in conjunction with Measure 3.1 may suggest that the focus on "context" was not effective.

The fact that the mean score for Measure 3.2 was consistent from AY 2017-2018 to AY 2018-2019 provides evidence that faculty are meeting student expectations in this area; however, the severe reduction in student participation in the WBIT survey at the end of the semester is cause for alarm.

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Because the findings demonstrate that our program met the target for SLO 3 through Measure 3.2, the Department will establish a more rigorous target to maximize the benefit of assessment in AY 2019-2020.

Decision: Consistent findings from both AY 2017-2018 and AY 2018-2019 provide evidence that the WBIT program successfully fulfills SLO 3 through Measure 3.2, with average scores of 4.67 and 4.5 out of 5 respectively. In AY 2018-2019, increased attention to context could not be accurately measured as student response was like the previous year. However, due to perceived correlation with Measure 3.1, this initiative will be replaced with a focus on “genre,” as an application of context. Furthermore, based on the analysis of these results the Department will revise expectations so that 80% of students will be expected to score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation in AY 2019-2020. More significantly, the survey tool, which is currently administered through Survey Monkey, will be administered through NSU’s MyNSU system in each class to encourage student participation.

SLO 4. Recognize and apply principles of visual communication. Visuals include more than just pictures. Typeface, font style, the arrangement of text on a page, even white space are all visual elements. These aspects of design are central to the effective communication of complex information, as are the ways in which a writer chooses graphical options for the presentation of information. Students will study document design, web design, and the use of visuals in technical communication and apply those lessons in their own work.

Measure 4.1 (Direct – Skill)

At the end of each semester, a panel of faculty members will evaluate a sample number of research papers and/or projects from all WBIT courses taught that year, using the standardized *Assessment Rubric for English Major Writing* (attached). The panel will determine if students can recognize and apply principles of visual communication. At least 75% of students sampled will score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Course Name (# of students)	Methodology	Target	Term
ENGL 5220 (2)	Project	75%	Fall 2018
ENGL 5280 (1)	Research Paper	75%	Fall 2018
ENGL 6560 (4)	Project	75%	Spring 2019

Findings:

AY 2017-2018	3/3 student assignments (100%) scored 3+.	Target met.
AY 2018-2019	7/7 student assignments (100%) scored 3+.	Target met.

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Analysis: In AY 2017-2018 the 70% target was met, as the 3 students who completed their projects and papers scored a mean of 5 out of 5. Because students had done so well in this area, no additional action for improvement was undertaken in the program. Based on this success, the Department revised expectations so that it was expected that at least 75% of students sampled would score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

In AY 2018-2019 the target continued to be met with 100% of students scoring 3 or higher on the evaluation, as the 7 students who completed their projects and papers scored a mean of 3.86 out of 5. Despite the fact that the target was met, this SLO is of the greatest concern, as the drop from a mean of 5 to a 3.86 suggests that visual rhetoric did not receive the same level of attention it had in the previous year so student projects did not as successfully integrate visual rhetorical awareness into their work. It seems likely that previous student success in this area coupled with increased attention in other areas pulled attention away from visual rhetoric. Moving forward, faculty will be encouraged to focus specifically on visual rhetoric in all WBIT courses.

Because there was a significant drop in Measure 4.1, WBIT faculty will participate in professional training on visual rhetoric and be encouraged to focus on visual rhetoric in all WBIT courses.

Because the findings demonstrate that our program met the target for SLO 4 through Measure 4.1, the Department will establish a more rigorous target to maximize the benefit of assessment in AY 2019-2020.

Decision: Findings from both AY 2017-2018 and AY 2018-2019 provide evidence that the WBIT program successfully fulfills SLO 4 through Measure 4.1, with average scores of 5.0 and 3.86 respectively. In AY 2018-2019, increased attention to other issues and a lack of a plan for addressing visual rhetoric led to a decrease in student success, which should be addressed. In the spirit of improvement, WBIT faculty will participate in professional training on visual rhetoric and be encouraged to focus on visual rhetoric in all WBIT courses. Furthermore, based on the analysis of these results the Department will revise expectations so that 80% of students will be expected to score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation in AY 2019-2020.

Measure 4.2 (Indirect – Attitude)

At the end of each semester, the program will sample students in WBIT courses with a survey, including a question that will state, "In my WBIT course(s) I was provided graduate-level instruction in visual communication related to technical communication and provided appropriate opportunities to practice applying that instruction in my own writing." Respondents will respond on a Likert scale: strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree. At least 75% of students will respond that they "strongly agree" or "agree" with the statement.

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Course Name (# of students)	Methodology	Target	Term
ENGL 5220 (0)	Survey	75%	Fall 2018
ENGL 5280 (1)	Survey	75%	Fall 2018
ENGL 6560 (1)	Survey	75%	Spring 2019

Findings:

AY 2017-2018 3/3 student responses (100%) were favorable. Target Met.

AY 2018-2019 1/2 student responses (100%) were favorable. Target Not Met.

Analysis: In AY 2017-2018 the 70% target was met, as the 3 students surveyed reported that they “strongly agreed” with the statement, for an arithmetic mean of 5.0 out of 5. Because faculty were clearly addressing these issues in courses and students were reporting having received instruction and opportunity to practice, the WBIT program was clearly meeting and exceeding expectations. Because students had done so well in this area, no additional action for improvement was undertaken in the program. The Department revised expectations so that it was expected that at least 75% of students sampled would respond that they “strongly agree” or “agree” with the statement on the survey question.

In AY 2018-2019 the target was not met with only 50% of students responding favorably on the survey question, as the 2 students who responded to the survey instrument reported that they “strongly agreed” with the statement and “Neither Agreed Nor Disagreed” with the statement, for a mean of 4 out of 5. While one student reported that they had received instruction and practice in visual rhetoric, the other did not report favorably to the question. To address this issue, WBIT faculty will be encouraged to specifically address visual rhetoric in all WBIT courses. Because only 2 out of 7 students completed the survey instrument, these results are not statistically useful, so action will be taken to increase student completion of the survey instrument.

The fact that the mean score for Measure 4.2 was consistent from AY 2017-2018 to AY 2018-2019 provides evidence that faculty are meeting and exceeding student expectations in this area when visual rhetoric is addressed; however, only 50% (1/2) of respondents reported favorable, suggesting that visual rhetoric may not have been adequately addressed in all WBIT courses. Unfortunately, the severe reduction in student participation in the WBIT survey at the end of the semester is cause for alarm and may have skewed results.

Because the findings demonstrate that our program did not meet the target for SLO 4 through Measure 4.2 but did through Measure 4.1, the Department will establish a more rigorous target to maximize the benefit of assessment in AY 2019-2020.

Decision: The shift in findings from AY 2017-2018 to AY 2018-2019 provide evidence that the WBIT program successfully fulfills SLO 4 through Measure 4.2 on average but that the instruction in visual rhetoric may not be consistent across the program, which is a concern, with 50% of students (1/2) reporting unfavorably to the question. In AY 2018-

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2019, visual rhetoric was not specifically identified as a focus for WBIT courses, and that may have resulted in not meeting the target. In the spirit of improvement, WBIT faculty will participate in professional training on visual rhetoric and be encouraged to focus on visual rhetoric in all WBIT courses. Furthermore, based on the analysis of these results the Department will revise expectations so that 80% of students will be expected to score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation in AY 2019-2020. More significantly, the survey tool, which is currently administered through Survey Monkey, will be administered through NSU's MyNSU system in each class to encourage student participation.

Comprehensive Summary of Key Evidence of Improvements Based on Analysis of Results

- Student achievement of targets for Measures 1.1, 2.1, 3.1, and 4.1 in AY 2018-2019 demonstrates the persistent success of the program regarding our established SLOs.
- Student reporting of targets for Measures 1.2, 2.2, and 3.2 in AY 2018-2019 demonstrates the continued success of the program regarding our established SLOs.
- Student reporting of not meeting the target for Measure 4.2 in AY 2018-2019 suggests the need for revision to current focus areas in some WBIT courses.
- Low response rates on the survey instrument for Measures 1.2, 2.2, 3.2, and 4.2 illustrate the need for better administration of the survey to ensure student participation.
- Intentional encouragement of faculty to address specific concerns related to writing for business, industry, and technology show initial evidence of success, particularly for Measures 1 and 2, which both showed improvement between the AY 2017-2018 and AY 2018-2019 reports.
- Comparison of AY 2017-2018 and AY 2018-2019 demonstrates the need for emphasis across the WBIT curriculum on visual rhetoric and refinement of attention to rhetorical context through the concept of genre.

Plan of Action Moving Forward

Our dedication to continual improvement for SLOs 1 and 2 as well as areas for improvement for SLOs 3 and 4 have led to the following curricular refinements to the courses in the WBIT curriculum:

- Increased attention in coursework to and practice in “conciseness” in technical style.

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- Increased attention in coursework to and practice in “audience awareness” in technical rhetoric.
- Increased attention in coursework to and practice in “genre” in technical rhetoric.
- Increased attention in coursework to and practice in “visual rhetoric” in technical communication.
- Migration of the survey tool, which is currently administered through Survey Monkey, to NSU’s MyNSU system in each class to encourage increased student participation.

To support these adjustments to course curriculum across the program, faculty will receive training in the theory and teaching of “conciseness,” “audience,” “genre,” and visual rhetoric” in the field of technical communication.

Finally, because findings demonstrate that our program met the targets for all SLOs in both AY 2017-2018 and 2018-2019, we will establish more rigorous targets to maximize the benefit of assessment in the future.

**Attachment A:
Graduate Certificate in Writing for Business, Industry, and Technology (WBIT)
Assessment Rubric for Direct Assessment (SLO 1.1, 2.1, 3.1, & 4.1)**

Assessor: _____

Paper Number: _____

		<u>Evaluation</u>				
		Check the applicable box indicate how well the student writing meets expectations for each SLO.				
Demonstration of Student Learning Outcomes:		Weak (1)	Weak to Competent (2)	Competent (3)	Competent to Strong (4)	Strong (5)
1.1	Demonstrate fluency in producing clear, correct, and concise language					
2.1	Recognize and apply principles and processes for communicating about technical subjects to diverse audiences					
3.1	Demonstrate rhetorical literacy through selection of appropriate technologies, genres, and strategies for a variety of communication situations					
4.1	Recognize and apply principles of visual communication					

**Attachment B:
Graduate Certificate in Writing for Business, Industry, and Technology (WBIT)
Student Survey: Academic Year 2018-2019**

**Writing for Business, Industry, and Technology (WBIT) Student Survey
Fall 2018-Spring 2019**

This semester, you enrolled in one or more courses that qualify for the Graduate Certificate in Writing for Business, Industry, and Technology (WBIT). We invite you to take part in a survey of student attitudes about learning in the course(s) you took. The person in charge of this survey is Dr. Thomas W. Reynolds, Jr. You may contact him with any comments or questions at reynoldst@nsula.edu.

This survey is comprised of 8 statements related to the Student Learning Outcomes and Program Satisfaction for the Graduate Certificate in WBIT. In response to these statements, we ask respondents to choose from the following Likert scale:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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At the conclusion of the survey, we ask respondents to complete 2 demographic questions that can be answered by selecting the appropriate choice(s) from a list of multiple choices. This information will be used for classification purposes only and will not be used to attempt to identify participants in any way. **No names or specific identifying information is collected in this survey.**

The purpose of this research project is to better understand the student perceptions of the program and their learning within the program. While study subjects will not be compensated in any way for participation, some studies suggest that reflecting on one's own writing practices can lead to improvement. More significantly, the results of the study should lead to improvements to our WBIT program in its approach to teaching technical communication to students. Additionally, this research may lead to future funding for advanced research on the topic.

Results will be disseminated to the faculty of the Department of English, Foreign Languages, and Cultural Studies at the beginning of the fall 2018 semester. Further dissemination may occur in the presentation or publication of these results in an academic paper.

Writing for Business, Industry, and Technology (WBIT) Student Survey
 Fall 2018-Spring 2019

Attitudinal Questions: Use the Likert scale beneath each statement below to rate your attitude regarding your learning this semester in your WBIT course(s).

1. In my WBIT course(s) I was provided graduate-level instruction in **clear, correct, and concise language** and provided appropriate opportunities to practice employing that instruction as a writer and editor.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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2. In my WBIT course(s) I was provided graduate-level instruction in **issues of audience related to technical communication** and provided appropriate opportunities to practice applying that instruction in my own writing.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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3. In my WBIT course(s) I was provided graduate-level instruction in **rhetorical considerations related to technical communication** and provided appropriate opportunities to practice applying that instruction in my own writing.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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4. In my WBIT course(s) I was provided graduate-level instruction in **visual communication related to technical communication** and provided appropriate opportunities to practice applying that instruction in my own writing.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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5. I was provided appropriate opportunities to practice technical communication in my WBIT course(s).

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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6. I am satisfied with the instruction I received in my WBIT course(s).

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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Demographic Questions: Please choose the option for each question that best describes you. No names or specific identifying information will be collected, and all

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demographic information will be kept confidential and used only as general indicators rather than individual markers.

7. In which of the following courses were you enrolled this semester? (check all that apply)

- ENGL 5060: Intercultural Communication
- ENGL 5220: Technical Writing
- ENGL 5230: Advanced Technical Writing and Editing
- ENGL 5280: General Composition Theory
- ENGL 6540: Computers and Composition
- ENGL 6560: Digital Culture: Theory and Practice
- ENGL 6880: Writing for Business, Industry, and Technology
- ENGL 6890: Grant Writing

8. In which of the following degree programs are you currently enrolled? (check all that apply)

- Graduate Certificate: Writing for Business, Industry, and Technology (WBIT)
- Graduate Certificate: Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)
- M.A.: Writing and Linguistics
- M.A.: Literature
- M.A.: Folk-Life/Southern Culture
- M.A.: Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)
- M.A.: Generalist
- Other: _____ (please specify)