

**Department of English
2019 Annual Assessment**

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2019 Assessment

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2018-2019 ASSESSMENT REPORT

PROGRAM IN RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION

GENERAL EDUCATION COURSES:

ENGL 1013: Composition I
ENGL 1023: Composition II
WLIT 1113: World Literature I
WLIT 1123: World Literature II

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Report Distributed July 1, 2019

Prepared for the Dean of the J. William Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences
University of Arkansas

Executive Summary

This report describes the methods used in the Program in Rhetoric and Composition's (PRC) most recent programmatic self-assessment, discusses the ramifications of the results of the assessment, and stipulates future assessment strategies in light of those results.

The assessment described herein is based on data generated from sections of the following courses under the purview of the PRC: ENGL 1013: Composition I; ENGL 1023: Composition II; WLIT 1113: World Literature I; and WLIT 1123: World Literature II. The data pertains to courses taught in the Department of English during the Fall 2018 semester alone.

In keeping with the rotation of targeted assessment objectives established in the Academic Assessment Plan submitted to the Dean of the J. William Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences in May of 2015, the PRC implemented the assessment of the meeting of learning objectives in the first-year composition courses and the review of instructor effectiveness in the first-year world literature courses. These first-year courses are included in the University core curriculum.

As concerns first-year composition courses, the data gathered during this period consisted of survey responses from 220 students enrolled in ENGL 1013 and 142 students enrolled in ENGL 1023. The data confirm that the PRC is successfully meeting the stated objectives of these courses (with those objectives being that students learn to draft, edit, and revise extended prose arguments in the form of researched essays to demonstrate sound argumentation, development of ideas, clear organization, accurate analysis, awareness of writing conventions, and mastery of standard linguistic forms). With regard to ENGL 1013, 86.5% of the responding students affirmed that the course is "successful or very successful" in meeting the stated course objectives. With regard to ENGL 1023, 87% percent of the responding students affirmed that the course is meeting its stated course objectives.

As concerns first-year world literature courses, the data considered for the assessment of instructor effectiveness in WLIT 1113 and WLIT 1123 consisted of 326 student course evaluations submitted in accordance with university protocols over the period in question. The review of the data allowed the Program to establish a 4.38 threshold instructor-rating average for overall teaching performance relative to peer instructors. Given the 4.38 instructor rating threshold, the data revealed that only 2 of 15 instructors were underperforming (by more than 1 full point deviation from the norm). As a first step in the identification of instructors who have underperformed relative to their peers, the threshold instructor rating enables the further review of the underperforming instructor to determine the reason for that status and enable its correction. That the average instructor rating for our course is high, and that the vast majority of our instructors scored at that rating or higher, speaks to the students' appreciation for the performance of world literature instructors during the Fall 2018 semester.

Introduction

The Program in Rhetoric and Composition (PRC) submits the following report in fulfillment of the self-assessment mandated by Fulbright College. This report is based on data generated from surveys of 817 students enrolled in 114 sections of ENGL 1013 and 1023 and course evaluation reports collected from all of the sections of WLIT 1113 and WLIT 1123 taught during the Fall 2018 semester. The data indicate success in meeting course goals and learning objectives across both courses (with those goals broadly being the drafting, editing, and revising of extended prose arguments in the form of researched essays to demonstrate sound argumentation, development of ideas, clear organization, accurate analysis, awareness of writing conventions, and mastery of standard linguistic forms). The following report will describe the methods used for this assessment, discuss the ramifications of the results of the assessment, and offer suggestions to improve teaching and assessment strategies.

ENGL 1013 Assessment

The following section details the methods, results, and discussion of the PRC's assessment of ENGL 1013: Composition I, during the Fall 2018 semester. The program chose to focus its assessment of this course on the basis of data for the fall semester because it was the second consecutive semester in which all sections of ENGL 1013 have featured a new curriculum focusing on primary research methods and discourse analysis. The aim was to see if there was confirmation of the findings reached in the preceding term.

Course Design

Within the new course design for ENGL 1013, students practice fundamental writing skills by drafting and revising a series of essays that develop from both primary and secondary research and culminate in detailed ethnographic accounts of local communities. Students first conduct preliminary research in order to choose the communities they will be researching and writing about for the semester. The first assignment requires students select a single community to research after considering a few of them; the assignment then requires that they state a purpose for writing, explain the research they have conducted, and describe what seem to be the most important aspects—according to preliminary research—of the chosen community (targeted skill: summarizing). The second assignment requires each student to interview community members and gather information through questionnaires and surveys concerning an element of community folklore, and then to draft a paper explaining the importance of that folklore to the community as a whole (targeted skills: summarizing and analyzing). The third assignment requires each student to conduct secondary research about the chosen community and to synthesize that research with the student's observations in order to produce a detailed ethnographic account of the community (targeted skills: summarizing, analyzing, synthesizing, critiquing, and arguing); the final assignment requires each student to gather his or her fieldnotes and previous drafts into a portfolio and to draft a brief memo that reflects on (1) the dual role of participant-observer, leading to an explanation of how each role revealed different aspects of the community the student chose to explore (targeted skill: argumentation) and (2) how those roles influenced them in presenting information in written form, either to elicit information from or to convey it to an imagined audience (targeted skill: meta-writing awareness). After drafting this memo, each student then engages in substantial guided revision of the ethnographic account. During this final stage, instructors work with students to help them adapt their papers into a different form (e.g., a blog or magazine article). The final assignment helps students to begin to learn that different writing tasks carry different expectations and therefore require differing strategies, concepts with which students will engage more rigorously in ENGL 1023: Composition II.

ENGL 1013 also introduces students to the means for collecting primary data, such as interviews, surveys, and questionnaires, which will serve them well as they transition into Composition II and complete assignments which require primary research. The very nature of the course therefore fundamentally engages students with the processes and methods of inquiry in the context of experiential, community-based learning.

Methods

Students enrolled in the 92 sections of ENGL 1013 offered during the Fall 2018 semester were administered an exit survey upon completing the course. These students completed a twelve-item exit survey (see Appendix A) in which they were asked to rate their agreement, on a five-point Likert scale, that the course successfully fulfilled its stated learning objectives. Across all 92 sections, 220 of the 1680 enrolled students, or 1.5%, completed the exit survey. This survey was distributed through Google Forms to ensure anonymity and ease of access.

The instructors of these 92 sections, all graduate teaching assistants in the department of English, were also administered an exit survey upon completing the course (see Appendix C). This survey asked instructors to rate their agreement, on a five-point Likert scale, that their students had successfully achieved the course's stated learning objectives. This survey was also distributed through Google Forms to ensure anonymity and ease of access. 35 of the 47 instructors teaching ENGL 1013 during the Fall 2018 semester responded to the survey.

Results

The data yielded by the above methods strongly suggest that ENGL 1013 is achieving its goals to the satisfaction of the students enrolled therein. The specific goal of this course is to teach students how to draft, revise, and edit researched essays to demonstrate sound argumentation, development of ideas, clear organization, accurate analysis, awareness of writing conventions, and mastery of standard linguistic forms, and to do so based on primary and secondary research conducted upon specific communities. In accordance with the stated purpose of the course, students learn, among other things, how to:

- analyze rhetorical situations;
- identify authoritative sources;
- identify persuasive appeals in written and visual texts;
- paraphrase and summarize accurately the ideas of others;
- develop a thesis and construct a convincing written argument for a specific audience;
- devise primary research materials and engage in primary research;
- use electronic resources to support field and library research;
- synthesize several sources using an established style for internal documentation and works cited;
- analyze and revise their own writing and the writing of others; and
- practice academic integrity and ethical communicative aims.

Of the 220 students surveyed (1.5% of the 1680 students enrolled at the beginning of Fall 2018), an overwhelming percentage responded positively to what they learned in the course. On average, 87.3% agreed or strongly agreed that the course was a success according to the specific goals listed above. On average 50.5% "strongly agreed" and 36.8% "agreed."

The strongest areas of the course, according to students' responses, regard student engagement with their projects and the teaching of the fundamental skills of summary, synthesis, analysis, and critique. Specifically, 187 or 85% of students selected aspects of the course as most helpful that

indicated engagement with their projects, and 216 or 98.% selected aspects that indicated satisfaction with the instruction in the fundamental skills of academic writing.

The instructors' responses to the items on the exit survey largely support the students' assessment of the course's success. On average, 71% agreed or strongly agreed that the course successfully taught the specific fundamental skills listed above. On average 74% strongly agreed or agreed that students were successful in progressing toward the course goals through the competencies taught by the major assignments.

The strongest areas of the course, according to instructors' responses, also regard student engagement with their projects and the teaching of the fundamental skills of summary, synthesis, analysis, and critique. Specifically, instructors felt that their students were highly engaged with their projects and successfully learned the fundamental skills taught in the course.

Discussion

Given the above results, the PRC concludes that the new iteration of ENGL 1013 achieved its stated course goals to the satisfaction of the student population served by the course and of those instructors tasked with delivering it. The responses to the instructors' exit survey aligned well with the responses to the students' exit survey, demonstrating that both instructors and students feel the course is a success. This approval on the part of students and instructors indicates that this course design continues to rigorously to foster fundamental writing and researching skills and a spirit of inquiry.

ENGL 1023 Assessment

The following section details the methods, results, and discussion of the PRC's assessment of ENGL 1023: Composition II, during the Fall 2018 semester.

Methods

Students enrolled in the 30 sections of ENGL 1023 offered during the Fall 2018 semester were administered an exit survey upon completing the course. These students completed a seven-item exit survey (see Appendix B) in which they were asked to rate their agreement, on a five-point Likert scale, that the course successfully fulfilled its stated learning objectives. Across all 30 sections and 560 students, 142 completed the exit survey. This survey was distributed through Google Forms to ensure the students anonymity and ease of access.

The instructors of these 30 sections, graduate teaching assistants and a few full-time and adjunct instructors in the department of English, were also administered an exit survey upon completing the course (see Appendix C). This survey asked instructors to rate their agreement, on a five-point Likert scale, that their students had successfully achieved the course's stated learning objectives. This survey was also distributed through Google Forms to ensure the students anonymity and ease of access. Of the 16 instructors teaching ENGL 1023 during the Fall 2018 semester, 10 responded to the survey.

Results

The data yielded by the above methods strongly suggest that ENGL 1023 is achieving its goals to the satisfaction of the students enrolled. The specific goal of this course is to continue to teach students the research and writing strategies and processes emphasized in Composition I but doing so through the analysis of the discursive and writing practices in their chosen fields of study. Students reflect on writing as a communicative practice and write critical essays that demonstrate sound argumentation, development of ideas, clear organization, effective analysis, awareness of writing

conventions, and mastery of standard linguistic forms. In accordance with the stated purpose of the course, students learn, among other things, how to:

- analyze rhetorical situations;
- identify authoritative sources in their discipline;
- identify persuasive appeals in written and visual texts;
- evaluate and experiment with a variety of rhetorical strategies and genres;
- recognize the demands that particular audiences place on written communication;
- use electronic resources to support library research;
- synthesize a variety of sources in the development of critical essays;
- generate a set of principles that will guide their sense of effective writing practices; and
- practice academic integrity and ethical communicative aims.

Of the 142 students surveyed (26% of the 560 students enrolled at the beginning of Fall 2018), an overwhelming percentage responded positively to what they learned in the course. On average, 87% agreed or strongly agreed that the course was a success according to the specific goals listed above. Specifically, 62% strongly agreed and 25% agreed. Also, 81% strongly agreed or agreed that the course met their personal expectations and helped them achieve their own goals for the course.

When asked to choose the three most helpful areas of the course, students selected these three most often: conferencing with instructors (70%), instruction and explanation by instructors (46%), and the three-step process for assignments (44%). For these students, the least helpful aspects of the course were in-class writing exercises (55%), in-class work with peers, and peer review of assignments. These selections were surprising since those are key pedagogical techniques commonly utilized in Composition course. We will review our training and support of teaching assistants in these techniques.

The instructors' responses to the items on the exit survey generally support the students' assessment of the course's success. On average, 50% agreed or strongly agreed that the course successfully taught the specific fundamental competencies listed above. 40% were neutral, and only 1 disagreed that the course accomplished its objectives.

The majority of instructors agreed or strongly agreed that the library resources and the major assignments effectively help students toward the course goals and competencies. The area that was considered unhelpful or problematic by both students and instructors was the textbook. The PRC is evaluating new textbook choices for Spring 2020.

Discussion

Given the above results, the PRC concludes that ENGL 1023 is achieving its stated course goals to the satisfaction of the student population served by the course and of those instructors tasked with delivering it. The responses to the instructors' exit survey aligned relatively well with the responses to the students' exit survey, demonstrating that both instructors and students feel the course is a success. The most immediate improvement to be implemented for Spring 2020 is a replacement of the textbooks with more accessible, engaging, and affordable selections that have already been identified.

Future Assessment of ENGL 1013 and 1023

Even though the new ENGL 1013 course design received mostly positive response from the survey subjects, the PRC has begun to revise the curriculum to better serve both our incoming freshmen and our Teaching Assistants who make up the majority of teaching staff for this course. We plan to

shift back to a course that leans less heavily on instruction and implementation of ethnographic research and writing, and more on fundamental academic and professional writing strategies. In Fall 2019, this will be the version of the course that we assess. Specifically, the PRC will seek confirmation of improved student writing through evaluation of student materials. While the PRC will continue to employ the intervention and exit survey models on a rotating basis, it will also lay the groundwork for a new and potentially more informative model of assessment, as described below.

WLIT 1113 Assessment

To assess WLIT 1113 World Literature I in Fall 2018, the PRC reviewed the student evaluation reports to gain insight into how this course is serving its student population, most of whom take this course as fulfillment of the Core Humanities Elective. The questions that ask students to assess or rate the course overall and the instructor overall were most valuable for our purposes. We also have noted the overall average of scores for all questions and sections.

In Fall 2018, 10 instructors taught 17 sections of WLIT 1113, including one Honors section and two online sections. The total number of students enrolled was 428, and 232 or 54% completed the course evaluation at the end of semester. On a scale of 1-5, 5 being the highest rating, the average rating for the course overall was 4.16. The mean rating for all English Department courses was 4.29, and for the Fulbright College was 4.18. So WLIT 1113 is in line with these averages, and not significantly below the average rankings for department and college.

The average overall rating for the instructors of WLIT 1113 was 4.34. For the English Department, instructors received on average a rating of 4.49, and in the College the average was 4.36. Again, the rating of instructors of WLIT 1113 in Fall 2018 was in line with those in the department and college.

The overall average of scores for all questions for this course was 4.37. These evaluations from over half of all students in WLIT 1113 report satisfaction with both course and instructor performance, and an evaluation far above average and close to the Excellent rating of 5. This student assessment indicates that the course is fulfilling its goal as a core humanities course and successfully acquainting students with literature with global scope, written up until 1650 AD. Our goals are to continue to assess and improve instructional materials and identify affordable resources for these older texts. We also plan to develop and offer additional training for TAs and instructors teaching this course for the first time. A minor change may be to the course title to one that indicates the date range of the readings rather than indicating that this is the first in a series, which it is not. WLIT 1113 is not a prerequisite for 1123. Students can take either or both in any order, to fulfill their requirements or their interests.

WLIT 1123 Assessment

To assess WLIT 1123 World Literature II in Fall 2018, the PRC reviewed the student evaluation reports to gain insight into how this course is serving its student population, most of whom take this course as fulfillment of the Core Humanities Elective. The questions that ask students to assess or rate the course overall, and the instructor overall, were most valuable for our purposes, as well as the average of all scores for the questions for this course.

In Fall 2018, 5 instructors taught 5 sections of WLIT 1123, including one Honors section and one online section. The total number of students enrolled was 143, and 67 or 47% completed the course evaluation at the end of semester. On a scale of 1-5, 5 being the highest rating, the average rating for the course overall was 4.37. The mean rating for all English Department courses was 4.29, and for the Fulbright College was 4.18. So WLIT 1123 exceeds these averages, coming close to the Excellent rating of 5.

The average overall rating for the instructors of WLIT 1123 was 4.5. For the English department, instructors received on average a rating of 4.49, and in the College the average was 4.36. Again, the rating of instructors of WLIT 1123 in Fall 2018 met or exceeded those in the department and college.

The overall average of scores for all questions for this course was 4.48. These evaluations from almost half of all students in WLIT 1123 report extreme satisfaction with both course and instructor performance, and an evaluation far above average and close to the Excellent rating of 5. This student assessment indicates that the course is fulfilling its goal as a core humanities course and successfully acquainting students with literature with global scope, written since 1650 AD. Our goals are to continue to assess and improve instructional materials and identify affordable versions of the texts. A minor change may be to the title of the course to one that indicates the date range of the readings rather than indicating that this is second in a series, which it is not. We believe this more specific naming would encourage enrollment from students who may incorrectly assume that they must take WLIT 1113 as a prerequisite for 1123. Students can take WLIT 1123 first or alone to fulfill their Humanities elective or other program requirement.

APPENDIX A: ENGL 1013: COMPOSITION I STUDENT EXIT SURVEY

1. Which of these strategies have you offered during each unit (4-week period for major assignments)?

- Peer Review
- Conference
- Small group work
- Discussion Board
- Journaling
- In-class Writing
- In-class Research
- Lecture or review over textbook reading assignments
- Exercises from the textbooks
- In-class discussion of readings
- Time for Fieldwork
- Library presentation
- Other presentations by experts
- Student presentations
- Games
- Bonus Points
- Proposals, reflections, other minor writing assignments

2. How are your students responding to the textbook and lecture material in this course? Rate 1-5, with 5 being engaged and excited about material, and 1 being confused and struggling.

1 2 3 4 5

3. How useful or relevant do you find the textbook material/reading assignments in helping students gain competencies and progress in major assignments? Rate 1-5, with 5 being Extremely useful and relevant, and 1 being not useful or relevant.

1 2 3 4 5

4. How are you, as instructor, managing the course content and teaching aids (syllabus, rubrics, prompts, library guides) that are provided? Rate 1-5, with 5 being organized and making progress, and 1 being confused and struggling.

1 2 3 4 5

5. As far as content and materials, briefly describe what is working well, what is not, and any additional aids you would like to have.

6. How would you rate the course as far as its effectiveness in helping students achieve the course goals? Rate 1-5, with 5 being very effective and 1 being not effective.

1 2 3 4 5

7. Please check any U of A Libraries resources you have used.
A visit to your classroom by a librarian.

Library Research Guides specific to your course, on the U of A Libraries website.
A visit to the library building with your students.
An in-class exercise using U of A Libraries databases
Other

8. Rate how helpful these library resources have been to your students in completing major writing assignments. Rate 1-5, with 5 being extremely helpful and 1 being not helpful.

1 2 3 4 5

9. Please tell us which Library resources have been particularly useful, as well as any additional or different resources that you would like the Library to offer. This includes suggesting changes or updates to the materials.

10. As far as the major assignments in your course, how successful have your students been in progressing toward the course goals/competencies that those assignments demonstrate and assess? Rate 1-5, with 5 being successful in making expected progress and 1 being no progress.

1 2 3 4 5

11. What do you feel are the areas that are most challenging or problematic for your students, and the areas in which they are learning and progressing as expected?

12. Please use this space for any other feedback you'd like to provide, or any additional explanation of your answers given above.

APPENDIX B: ENGL 1023: COMPOSITION II STUDENT EXIT SURVEY

1. How successful was this course in meeting the objectives listed in the syllabus? Rate this 1-5, 5 being very successful and 1 being unsuccessful.

1 2 3 4 5

2. How well did this course meet your personal expectations and/or help you achieve your goals? Rate this 1-5, 5 being very successful and 1 being unsuccessful or unhelpful.

1 2 3 4 5

3. If you took comp I at U of A, how would you rate your preparation for and transition to Comp II? (Do not answer if you did not take Comp I at U of A.) Rate this 1-5, 5 being excellent preparation and 1 being poor preparation.

1 2 3 4 5

4. Which three of these components of the course were MOST helpful to you?

- Lectures or explanation by instructor
- Group work with peers
- Peer review of drafts
- Conferences with instructor
- Learning to use library resources for research
- In-class exercises
- Revision practices and activities
- In-class discussion
- Textbooks and materials
- Free writing

5. Which three of these components of the course were LEAST helpful to you?

- Lectures or explanation by instructor
- Group work with peers
- Peer review of drafts
- Conferences with instructor
- Learning to use library resources for research
- In-class exercises
- Revision practices and activities
- In-class discussion
- Textbooks and materials
- Free writing

7. Please give us any feedback that will help us understand your experience and make our course better. Remember, this is anonymous.

APPENDIX C: ENGL 1013 and 1023: INSTRUCTOR EXIT SURVEY

1. Which of these strategies have you offered during each unit (4-week period for major assignments)?

- Peer Review, Conference
- Small group work
- In-class Writing
- In-class research
- Lecture or review over textbook reading assignments
- Exercises from the textbooks,
- In-class discussion of readings
- Library presentation
- Proposals, reflections, other minor writing assignments

2. How are your students responding to the textbook and lecture material in this course? Rate 1-5, with 5 being very successfully and 1 being not at all successfully.

1 2 3 4 5

3. How useful or relevant do you find the textbook material/reading assignments in helping students gain competencies and progress in major assignments? Rate 1-5, with 5 being very useful and relevant, and 1 being not at all useful or relevant.

1 2 3 4 5

4. How are you, as instructor, managing the course content and teaching aids (syllabus, rubrics, prompts, library guides) that are provided? Rate 1-5, with 5 being very successfully and 1 being not at all successfully.

1 2 3 4 5

5. As far as content and materials, briefly describe what is working well, what is not, and any additional aids you would like to have.

6. How would you rate the course as far as its effectiveness in helping students achieve the course goals? Rate 1-5, with 5 being very effective and 1 being not at all effective.

1 2 3 4 5

7. Please check any U of A Libraries resources you have used.
- A visit to your classroom by a librarian.
 - Library Research Guides specific to your course, on the U of A Libraries website.
 - A visit to the library building with your students
 - An in-class exercise using U of A Libraries databases and/or Research Guides
 - Other

8. Rate how helpful these library resources have been to your students in completing major writing assignments. Rate 1-5, with 5 being very helpful and 1 being not helpful at all.

1 2 3 4 5

9. Please tell us which Library resources have been particularly useful, as well as any additional or different resources that you would like the Library to offer. This includes suggesting changes or updates to the materials.

10. As far as the major assignments in your course, how successful have your students been in progressing toward the course goals/competencies that those assignments demonstrate and assess? Rate 1-5, with 5 being successful in making expected progress and 1 being no progress.

1 2 3 4 5

11. What do you feel are the areas that are most challenging or problematic for your students, and the areas in which they are learning and progressing as expected?

12. Please use this space for any other feedback you'd like to provide, or any additional explanation of your answers given above.

Creative Writing I (ENGL 2023) Assessment 2017-2018

Procedures

WHAT UNIVERSITY GENERAL EDUCATION OUTCOMES GUIDE STUDENT LEARNING IN COURSES THAT CARRY ARTS AND HUMANITIES CREDIT?

Learning Outcomes: Upon completion of three hours of fine arts and three hours of humanities courses, students will understand and articulate

- Basic structures, themes, and principles of the discipline being introduced;
- Important philosophical, religious, and ethical ideas inherent in the discipline being introduced and inscribed by writers, artists, and thinkers;
- The processes by which artistic and humanistic values and aesthetics are formed and challenged over time;
- Connections among cultural achievements of various groups of people of different ethnicities, religious backgrounds, racial origins, and sexual identities.

HOW DOES THE PROGRAM IN CREATIVE WRITING AND TRANSLATION INTEND TO ASSESS STUDENT LEARNING OF THESE OUTCOMES IN ENGL 2023?

The Program in Creative Writing and Translation currently oversees six sections of ENGL 2023, Creative Writing I—an approved core course in fine arts. Each section of the course is capped at 15 students, resulting in a maximum of 90 students enrolled each semester. The sections are led by instructors or teaching assistants, who are trained and supervised by the creative writing program's assistant director. Some of the issues covered during training are: time management to ensure equal coverage of genres; best practices and exercises to teach writing technique; discussion of grading strategies and rubrics; and fulfillment of the primary goals of the course.

The primary goals of ENGL 2023, as outlined in the petition to become a core course, state that students who take the course will:

- be exposed to a broad array of literary works in terms of form, style, and time period;
- develop the ability to read texts closely for content, style, and technique;
- increase their competency in writing stories and poems that are compelling, both technically and aesthetically; and
- exercise their imaginative powers and develop human empathy.

The Program in Creative Writing and Translation sees these primary goals as working toward the learning outcomes for fine arts and humanities core courses.

In order to test the success of ENGL 2023 in promoting the primary goals and learning outcomes, the creative writing program has devised a course assessment survey. The survey will be administered to all ENGL 2023 students by their instructor/TA two to three weeks before the end of each semester. Students will be presented with eight statements and prompted to rate the course according to each statement. Ratings will be recorded on scantron forms (4521) according to a 1 to 5 system, with 1 representing “strongly disagree” and 5 representing “strongly agree.” Instructors/TAs will deliver their section’s scantrons to the assistant director, who will have all 90 surveys analyzed by the university IT Services office.

The report generated by IT Services will be delivered to the director of the Program in Creative Writing and Translation, who will determine if goals and learning outcomes are being adequately met. Action will be taken only if the surveys indicate that students are not making adequate progress toward one or more learning outcome(s). In that event, the director may institute changes up to and including:

- barring an instructor or TA from teaching the course in future semesters,
- altering training protocols for ENGL 2023 instructors and TAs, and/or
- reviewing the course curriculum to determine if deeper changes need to be made.

STUDENT SURVEY ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR ENGL 2023

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 representing “strongly agree” and 1 representing “strongly disagree,” please rate the following statements:

As a result of taking this course (ENGL 2023 – Creative Writing I)

1. I have been exposed to an array of literary works of various forms, styles, and time periods.
2. I have improved my ability to read texts closely for content, style, and technique.
3. I have increased my competency in writing stories and poems.
4. I have exercised my imagination toward development of human empathy.
5. I better understand the basic genres, principles, and techniques of creative writing.
6. I have become more familiar with the ways in which important philosophical, religious, and/or ethical ideas are expressed and explored in creative writing.
7. I have a greater understanding of how prevailing aesthetics in fiction and poetry have been formed and challenged over time.
8. I have been introduced to the stylistic and/or thematic conversation that exists between writers of various ethnicities, religious backgrounds, racial origins, and/or sexual identities.

Survey Results

Fall 2018

Item Statistics Report (attached)

Spring 2019

Question Mean Report (attached)

Summary

Overall, the Program in Creative Writing and Translation is heartened and encouraged by the results of our Fall 2018/Spring 2019 Core Course Assessment of Creative Writing I (ENGL 2023). Clearly, this is a popular course that we believe is attracting majors to our department.

Based on the attached survey results, Creative Writing I is meeting its primary objectives as established by the program at the time we proposed converting the course to a core course satisfying the university's fine arts requirement. At that time, we set forth the objectives that students taking the course would be exposed to a broad array of literary works in terms of form, style, and time period; would develop the ability to read texts closely for content, style, and technique; would increase their competency in writing stories and poems that are compelling, both technically and aesthetically; and would exercise their imaginative powers and develop human empathy.

1. In 2017/2018, students scored the course particularly highly for exposing them to an array of literary works of various forms, styles, and time periods (Question 1), for improving their ability to read texts closely for content, style, and technique (Question 2), for increasing their competency in writing stories and poems (Question 3), and for exercising their imagination toward development of human empathy (Question 4), and for introducing them to the stylistic and/or thematic conversation that exists between writers of various ethnicities, religious backgrounds, racial origins, and/or sexual identities (Question 8).

The area in which we did not score 4 or higher (on a scale of 1 to 5) in the Fall 2018 semester was question 7, with a mean score of 3.95:

I have a greater understanding of how prevailing aesthetics in fiction and poetry have been formed and challenged over time.

In Spring 2019, the mean score for question 7 was 3.62.

Along with question 7, the areas in which we did not score 4 or higher (on a scale of 1 to 5) in the Spring 2019 semester were questions 5 and 6:

I better understand the basic genres, principles, and techniques of creative writing.

I have become more familiar with the ways in which important philosophical, religious, and/or ethical ideas are expressed and explored in creative writing.

In Fall 2018, the mean scores for these questions were 4.22 and 4.0, respectively, dropping slightly in the Spring 2019 semester to 3.69 and 3.46, respectively.

While not low enough to indicate to us an issue of pressing concern, the change nonetheless highlights an area in need of improvement.

The Creative Writing Program experienced a period of transition in terms of overseeing and monitoring our sections of Creative Writing I in the 2018-19 school year, with our new assistant director starting work in August. One of her main responsibilities is to train and oversee the graduate students who are selected to teach our six sections of Creative Writing I each semester, and she has taken measures to provide instructors with evaluative strategies that will assist them in identifying areas in which student understanding can be further developed as the semester progresses. We are confident that this, along with supporting instructors with training and resources as they develop curriculum rooted in the craft of writing, will yield measurable improvements in student outcomes.

Question Mean Report

Question	Low	High	Mean	
Question1	1.00	5.00	4.15	1.00  5.00
Question2	1.00	5.00	4.00	1.00  5.00
Question3	1.00	5.00	4.00	1.00  5.00
Question4	1.00	5.00	4.00	1.00  5.00
Question5	1.00	5.00	3.69	1.00  5.00
Question6	1.00	5.00	3.46	1.00  5.00
Question7	1.00	5.00	3.62	1.00  5.00
Question8	1.00	5.00	4.38	1.00  5.00

**Introduction to Literature
English 1213
Core Course**

We taught the course twice in Academic Year 2018-2019, and each of the two faculty members wrote up a report. As a department, we are still figuring out how to teach this course most effectively to non-majors, and we are still figuring out which colleagues will be most effective in teaching the course. The first professor below had considerably better results than did the second. This may have been a one-off, given that the second professor is one of our most-appreciated teachers in general.

I. First Professor's Report, Fall 2018

Design

I chose to create a bank of literary-critical terms that would serve as the basis for class discussion. This bank of terms encompassed the four learning goals required for the course. I have provided some examples of the chosen terms below the appropriate category.

- *Basic structures, themes, and principles of the discipline being introduced*
 - Basic critical terms for the study of literature, such as: Character Arc, Protagonist, Enjambment, Metaphor, Manuscript, etc.
 - Different genres: Magical Realism, High Fantasy, Romance, etc.
- *Important philosophical, religious, and ethical ideas inherent in the discipline being introduced and inscribed by writers, artists, and thinkers*
 - Terms centering on an idea or controversy: Intentional Fallacy, Reader Response, Heroic Ethos, etc.
- *The processes by which artistic and humanistic values and aesthetics are formed and challenged over time*
 - Terms such as: Horizon of Expectations (Hans Jauss), Ars gratia artis, patronage, mythopoeia, etc.
- *Connections among cultural achievements of various groups of people of different ethnicities, religious backgrounds, racial origins, and sexual identities*
 - Terms such as: Colonial/Postcolonial Studies, Race in Fantasy, Whiteness, the Other, etc.

Importantly, these terms were not merely a list of words and definitions to memorize. I would begin each class period with one or two terms and lecture on them for 10-25 minutes. The discussion portion of the class would then begin with the application of the day's terms to the literature we had read for the day. Therefore, each term represents a substantial amount of class time.

Results

Understandably, the students performed much better on the post-test. I chose twenty terms to put on each assessment. A few terms overlapped (as expected), but not much.

Pre-test average: 1.6/20 (8% correct).

Pos-test average: 17/20 (85% correct)

Possible Changes in Teaching

In truth, I ended up liking the assessment design, and I wish I had put even more thought into it before the course began. This was the first time I taught English 1213, and, of course, the list of possible terms grew as the class went along, and I found myself wishing I had included some and omitted others. Therefore, I have a better idea of what terms to include and how to make them the center of discussion in a way that is natural and incremental.

II. Second Professor's Report, Spring 2019

Assessment Pre-Test: Average Grade of 66

Grade	Number of Students Receiving this Grade
A	0
B	4
C	8
D	3
F	9

Assessment Post-Test: Average Grade of 77

Grade	Number of Students Receiving this Grade
A	5
B	7
C	4
D	3
F	5

The Assessment Pre-Test indicated that half the class either failed or came close to failing, and there were no A's and only 4 B's. The Assessment Post-Test, to some extent, reversed these figures. Twelve students received either an A or a B, yet eight still failed or came close to failing. These results pretty much reflect my feelings about the course. I

would call it only a moderate success. Throughout I had trouble getting students to read the material, and many complained about the “irrelevance” of the material to their course of study, the [non-assessment] testing method (essay rather than the preferred multiple choice), and the difficulty of the subject matter.

Academic Assessment Report B.A. Program in English, 2019

Academic Program Assessment Plan

The English Department Assessment Committee (Instructor Karen Madison), with faculty approval, assessed our Spring 2019 graduates' proficiency in English studies with an internally created senior assessment exam. The committee has correlated the results with each individual graduating student's English studies grade point average (GPA).

History

In 2016, the Committee (Karen Lentz Madison and Raina Smith Lyons) conducted research into a variety of assessment methods used by our peer institutions with the goal of either adding a new component to our assessment in the form of a less expensive test than ETS standardized testing or pursuing a consequential method, differing from our previous assessments. (See Appendix A: Previous Protocol.) The Committee sought evaluation methods that would accurately assess the competency of our graduating English majors, including surveying the assessment programs of our peer institutions. It found that few surveyed institutions actually had assessment programs in place and that none were as comprehensive in their methods as the Department desired.

The research presented three different options:

1. Administering the standardized ETS subject test and correlating it with qualitative Data.
2. Collecting portfolios of students' work from the beginning and end of their U of A undergraduate careers, which would be evaluated and compared.
3. Creating a self-administered, department-created Proficiency in English Studies (PIES) Exam to correlate the PIES score with other student data, such as GPA and number of semesters to graduation.

The Assessment Committee recommended to our faculty the third assessment option listed above. As we were tasked with creating a self-study assessment, the Committee asked for and received the English Department faculty's approval in October 2016 with an agreement that members would contribute a pool of questions to use in the creation of the exam.

The Committee designed the PIES exam as a tool to measure the successful accomplishment of our program and student learning goals:

Program Goals

1. Students in the English B.A. program should acquire both general and specialized knowledge in their field, as well as develop academic skills in preparation for careers in academia, education, and a number of ALTAC careers.

2. B.A. students should also gain professionalization skills and knowledge in preparation for going on the job market or applying to graduate programs.
3. B.A. students should be able to complete their degrees in a timely fashion.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. B.A. students should demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge of literary works in the English language, from the Medieval Period to the present. This knowledge should include a basic understanding of broad concepts such as genres, periods, and movements as well as a familiarity with a variety of individual texts that exemplify these concepts.
2. B.A. students should be able to demonstrate knowledge of and an appreciation for diversity, specifically as it relates to a wide range of English-speaking cultures.
3. B.A. students should possess skills for the appreciation and critical reading of literary texts, including a general knowledge of techniques of literary analysis and criticism, and be able to use these techniques to write intelligently about literature.
4. B.A. students should be able to analyze, create, and defend complex arguments in correct and rhetorically effective written English.
5. B.A. students majoring only in English should be able to complete their degrees in 4 years; B.A. students with additional majors should be able to complete their degrees in 4 to 5 years, depending upon number and type of additional majors.
6. Graduating B.A. students should be able to secure employment, or to pursue additional education, that will aid them in developing professional careers.

Assessment of Student Learning

Methods

Direct Assessment Method:

Ratings of student skills by field experience supervisors

Our Proficiency in English Studies exam questions were created by our faculty (field experience supervisors) and evaluated to their standards. The exam was administered and proctored via Blackboard by the Assessment Committee. (See Appendix B: Assessment Instructions.)

Most faculty members developed fifteen discipline/area questions each that stemmed from our required 1000-2000-level survey courses and Introduction to Shakespeare course. (When the anticipated revised undergraduate requirements go into effect, the questions can be readily reevaluated and updated.)

These questions became a set of questions to be used in the randomly generated PIES exam administered through the self-grading Blackboard tool, Respondus Monitor on an English Department Advising Blackboard course link. (See Appendix C: Sample Questions.)

The exit exam for graduating seniors consists of 30 questions, all from the above mentioned pool:

- Five questions of general knowledge.
- Five advanced-level of knowledge.
- Five American Literature questions.
- Five British Literature questions
- Five World Literature questions.
- Five questions of diversity -related knowledge within those above mentioned courses.

As in 2017, each graduating student signed into his/her University Blackboard account to access the course in order to take the exit exam and to answer a set of thirty questions delivered individually (rather than as a full page of questions) and randomly to insure independent attempts. The Committee (K. Madison) also continued to require each student to use the Respondus Monitor, which records the entire testing procedure, to preclude access to internet, notes, and/or study partners to ensure untainted assessment results.

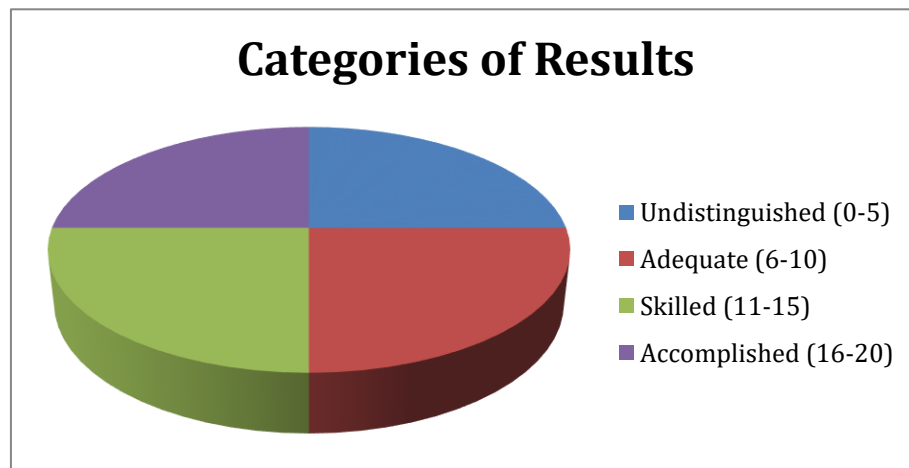
Indirect Assessment Methods

Each individual student's score on the PIES Exam is correlated with additional, qualitative data about the student. These external measures are

- Students' GPAs in major
- Number of semesters to graduation and graduation rates.

The results generated reveal graduates to be accomplished, skilled, adequate, and undistinguished.

- Accomplished: 16-20 correct
- Skilled: 11-15 correct
- Adequate: 6-10 correct
- Undistinguished: 0-5 correct



Forty-nine students took the exam out of the forty-nine students who applied for graduation (100 percent of graduating seniors participating). According to Institutional Research, the percentage reveals a “respectable” confidence level in outcome. (See Appendix D. Testing Sample Statement.)

Timelines for Data Collection and Analysis

Fall 2016:

- October: The Committee met with the English Department faculty members to request their approval of and collaboration in the creation of the PIES exam.
- October/December: The Committee began working with Blackboard support to create the course template for English Department Advising.

Spring 2017:

- January/February: The Committee sorted and coded the questions and developed the exam.
- February/March: The exam was uploaded into the Respondus Monitor program, along with a separate, three-question Excellence in Teaching faculty committee survey for its own use. (See Appendix E: Teaching Excellence Survey.)
- March: As soon as students declared an intention to graduate, the Committee added its information to the Blackboard course and sent emails regarding the exam to potential graduates. The Committee worked with the Dean’s Office to ensure that the timed assessment exam is now registered as a requirement for graduation on students’ degree audits, as is the Senior Writing Assessment requirement.
- April: The deadline for taking the PIES exam was April 15, and after that date, the students’ test data was compared with departmental GPAs. Only students who graduated in Spring 2017 took the exam.
- May: The Committee prepared a report of its findings and evaluated its assessment method and sent the Chair of The Teaching Excellence Committee the results of the survey. It also created a class on Blackboard for 2018 graduates and uploaded the newly created 2018 exam.

Spring 2018

- March: As soon as students declared an intention to graduate, the Committee added its information to the 2018 Blackboard course. The Committee contacted the Fulbright English advisor to update the fulfilled requirement for graduation on individual degree audits after students completed the exam. Also, the advisor was added to the Blackboard class for access to the verifications of completion.

- April: The deadline for taking the PIES exam was April 30, and after that date, the students' test data was compared with departmental GPAs. Only students who graduated in Spring 2018 took the exam.

Spring 2019

- March: As soon as students declared an intention to graduate, the Committee added its information to the 2019 Blackboard course. The Committee contacted the Fulbright English advisor to update the fulfilled requirement for graduation on individual degree audits after students completed the exam.
- April: The deadline for taking the PIES exam was April 30, and after that date, the students' test data was compared with departmental GPAs. Only students who graduated in Spring 2019 took the exam.

Use of Results

The most important information to share about the results for the 2017, 2018, and 2019 testing is two-fold:

The Committee will examine ways in which the Dept. of English might better serve our students, and it will utilize the results of these assessments as a tool for a departmental revision process, once the strengths and weaknesses of this assessment protocol are evident. The results of the assessment will affect decisions on curriculum and instruction by revealing areas our students are not acquiring the knowledge our faculty deem necessary for well-rounded English major graduates.

This assessment is part of an over-all plan and, as such, is in the third year of a three-year study. It is unrealistically harsh or optimistic to base the state of the department on one test for one year's group of students.

Therefore, PIES data was collected for three years to insure uniform accuracy of results and conclusions. The Committee can report only the limited data corresponding with the 2019 PIES outcomes that relate to program goals and student learning outcomes, as it did with the previous outcomes. Since this is the third year of this particular exit exam, the Committee will assess the exam itself in the fall of 2019.

Program Goals

At present, the data confirm that many of our students are meeting our expectations regarding program goals. However, a substantial number of our students *appear* to be not meeting expectations. Overall, the data reveal a full range of results with room for improvement.

The Committee has ascertained the percentage of students in the English B.A. program 1.) who have acquired both general and specialized knowledge in their field and 2.) who have

developed academic skills in preparation for careers in academia, education, and a number of ALT-AC careers.

Totals for 49 Graduating Seniors

Accomplished	9
Skilled	5
Adequate	9
Undistinguished	26

When we correlate the overall scores with the students' GPAs in Major, we find unexpected results. Some of our highest GPA students scored poorly, while some of our lowest did comparatively well. Over half of our students fall into the 2.0, undistinguished category, a drop from the advancement to half in the 3.0 range in 2018, reverting to the lower initial percentages of 2017.

GPA 4.0 / 8 Students

Accomplished	2
Skilled	2
Adequate	1
Undistinguished	3

GPA 3.0 / 5 Students

Accomplished	2
Skilled	0
Adequate	1
Undistinguished	2

GPA 3.0 / 35 Students

Accomplished	4
Skilled	3
Adequate	7
Undistinguished	21

GPA 1.0. / 1 Student

Accomplished	1
Skilled	0
Adequate	0
Undistinguished	0

After three years of testing, the Department will be endeavoring to identify which students do poorly on the exam because of their lack of engagement in the curriculum and/or with the exam itself. (See the Duration Totals Chart below and Appendix F. Student Correspondence.) The Committee hopes to identify gaps in the knowledge of otherwise exemplary students. Once it has identified if there are indeed gaps in knowledge, it can address ways in which our curriculum might better meet the students' needs. If no significant gaps exist, it will look toward ways to incentivize our students to recognize the importance of the exam as a legacy, rather than as a burden.

To that end, this year, the Committee noted the time each student spent in taking the exam and found that most of the students who scored poorly spent less than 10 minutes of the 60 minutes allotted to them. The correlation between the time engaged, the score, and the lack of commitment to Department goals needs to be addressed. (See "Improving Response," page 13, the final page of this report before its appendices.)

Duration

Minutes / 60	Students
1-2 minutes	0
3 minutes	7
4 minutes	4
5 minutes	5
6 minutes	5
7 minutes	9
8 minutes	9
9 minutes	7
10 minutes	2
11 minutes	3
12 minutes	3
13-28 minutes	0
29 minutes	1

The Committee will continue to correlate qualitative data, such as GPA within major (which indicates not only knowledge but also classroom participation, quality of writing, and research ability across all of the students' English courses).

Student Learning Outcomes

Although three years of data were collected to insure the integrity of the assessment tool, the immediate results of the exit exam were achieved by this method:

Each individual student's score on the 2017-2019 PIES Exam was correlated with additional, qualitative data about the student, to provide a more comprehensive profile of the student, and to offset aberrations in test scores. These external measures were

1. Students' GPAs in major
2. Number of semesters to graduation and graduation rates
3. Margin of error: Students answered 30 questions and were allowed to miss 10 questions to achieve a perfect 20/20 score. (If a student scored 16/30, results were 16/20). (See Appendix G: Offset Margin.)

The numbers collected reflect *three* of the six Assessment of Student Learning Criteria:

1. B.A. students should demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge of literary works in the English language, from the Medieval Period to the present. This knowledge should include a basic understanding of broad concepts such as genres, periods, and movements as well as a familiarity with a variety of individual texts that exemplify these concepts.
2. B.A. students should be able to demonstrate knowledge of and an appreciation for diversity, specifically as it relates to a wide range of English-speaking cultures.

3. B.A. students should possess skills for the appreciation and critical reading of literary texts, including a general knowledge of techniques of literary analysis and criticism, and be able to use these techniques to write intelligently about literature.

The *fourth* Assessment of Student Learning Criteria is evidenced in the Major GPA with the grades assigned as qualifying the graduate to satisfy his Senior Writing Requirement as found in the catalogue:

Writing Requirement: All upper-division English courses require a research or an analytical paper except ENGL 4003 and the courses in creative writing (ENGL 3013, ENGL 4013, ENGL 4023, ENGL 4073). For this reason, all students who fulfill the requirements for a major in English thereby fulfill the Fulbright College writing requirement. In addition, 4000-level courses (except for those noted above) require more intensive research by, and more active participation from, students than 3000-level courses do and require each student to complete a paper that can be included as a writing sample with applications to graduate programs or professional schools.

4. B.A. students should be able to analyze, create, and defend complex arguments in correct and rhetorically effective written English.

Future Tasks

Immediate Timeline

2020 PIES Assessment Exam

Spring 2019:

- May 2019: Create 2020 PIES exam from the faculty question pool and upload it to the 2020 Blackboard class, Proficiency In English Assessment, 2020.
- June 2019: Begin to reevaluate the PIES Exam itself as a diagnostic for Departmental purposes.

Spring 2020:

- March: Load the declared graduating seniors' IDs, user names, major GPAs and GPAs onto the Blackboard "course." Notify students that the assessment exam is available.
- March/April: Evaluate the results of the 2020 PIES exam.
- April/May: Draft the 2020 Assessment Report. Create the 2021 PIES exam from the (updated) faculty question pool for potential use in March 2021.

Immediate Future Timeline

2021 PIES Evaluation and Assessment Exam

Fall 2019:

- September-October: Evaluate three years of data (2017-9), taking into consideration comparisons of the percentages of the four student rating categories, the five question categories, and the particular questions missed, as well as duration of

student effort during the exam. .This evaluation process will include evaluating the video-monitored exams of low-scoring participants.

- October-November: Determine the correspondence between the data and the Departmental Goals and Student Assessment Outcomes.
- November: Reevaluate the PIES Exam as a diagnostic for Departmental purposes, taking into consideration Committee suggestions for outcomes improvement and anticipated changes of undergraduate requirements for majors.
- December: Draft the Proficiency in English Studies Assessment Report.
Discuss evaluation of PIES protocol with faculty.

Spring 2020:

- January-February: Upload 2020 exam (prepared in May 2019) to Blackboard with adaptations per Committee suggestions or create a new diagnostic protocol.
- March: Load the declared graduating seniors' IDs and user names onto the Blackboard "course." Notify students that the assessment exam is available.
- April: Evaluate the results of the PIES exam.
- April/May: Prepare the 2021 Departmental Assessment Report.

Extended Timeline

2021 PIES Assessment

- July 2020/March 2021: Create and administer a survey for assessing the one remaining Program Goal (relating to retention) and the two Student Learning Outcomes (relating to retention, graduation, and employment).
Program Goals:
 - 3.) B.A. students should be able to complete their degrees in a timely fashion.
- Student Learning Outcomes:*
 - 5.) B.A. students majoring only in English should be able to complete their degrees in 4 years; B.A. students with additional majors should be able to complete their degrees in 4 to 5 years, depending upon number and type of additional majors.
 - 6.) Graduating B.A. students should be able to secure employment, or to pursue additional education, that will aid them in developing professional careers.
- March 2021: Gather declared graduating seniors' IDs and user names. Load the data onto the Blackboard "course." Notify students that the assessment survey is available.
- March/April: Evaluate the results of the survey.
- April/May: Draft the 2021 Assessment Report.
- May: Determine the necessity of repeating the PIES assessment exam, utilizing the results reported in the 2019 PIES assessment report to determine the need to update the current faculty pool of questions and/or update or adapt assessment methods.

Determine employment statistics three years after graduation to correspond with the scores of the PIES exam and student learning outcome goals 5 and 6.

Suggestions for Score Improvement and Remediation of Concerns

At this point, the Committee recognizes that our graduates do have a wide range of scores in our designated categories (Accomplished, Skilled, Adequate, Undistinguished). Although not everyone is proficient, the Committee believes that the number of students who score inside the preferred ranges (accomplished and skilled) can be increased with two strategies:

Improving Scores

- Add more nineteenth-century British literature questions because our majors heavily enroll in these courses, and the original exam pool has a low percentage of representative questions.
- Cross reference the missed questions represented within each of the four student categories in the third year of testing, as a means of clearly understanding our numbers.
- Evaluate the number of students who missed a question that came from a particular course (especially the surveys) that s/he did not take.
- Disallow an attempt that is under 15 minutes to encourage serious effort.
- Consider posting the grades to the transcript (as stated in the Catalogue of Studies) so that students are not tempted to discount the importance of the exam. (See Appendix H: Suggested Catalogue Emendations.)

Improving Response

Although we have a 100 percent rate of response with our exam in 2019, an 88 percent response in 2018, and a 93 percent in 2017, misplaced resentment on the part of the students exists. We will encourage early student acceptance of and engagement in the following manner:

- Inform advisees, via our Fulbright College advisor, Sarah Hayes Langley, of the requirement.
- Recruit our Sigma Tau Delta president as an Assessment Committee member to inform STD members of the departmental requirement and to promote positive interactions in regard to it.
- Establish a drawing to encourage timely responses (\$50 gift certificates or comparable prizes).
- Post Facebook announcements and positive commentary by our faculty about the exam.
- Explain in our exam subject classes (surveys and Shakespeare) that the assessment is part of students' degree audit (along with our senior writing requirement).
- Remind our English majors in the fall semester of the up-coming exit exam to ensure their familiarity with the department's catalogue requirements.
- Consider updating the assessment requirement as listed in the catalogue in order to mitigate discontent/dissatisfaction and its attendant issues arising from semesters when there is no necessity to administer the exam. (See Appendix H: Suggested Catalogue Emendations.)

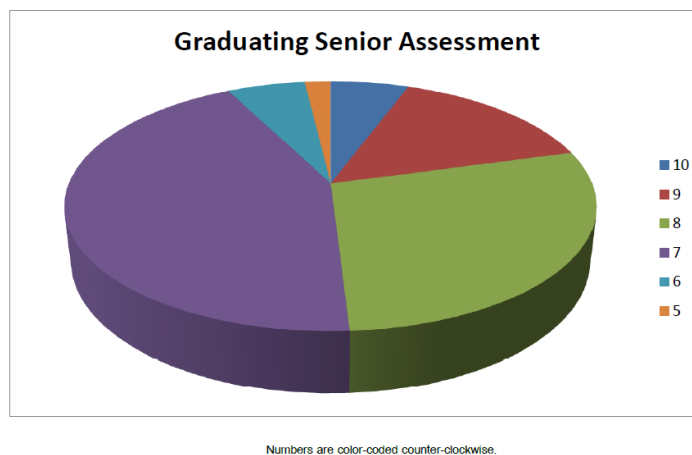
Appendix A: Previous Protocol

Department of English B.A. Senior Assessment Report 2015

English Department faculty rated the analytical and writing competencies of our graduating seniors, each of whom was asked to designate a course and teacher for evaluative purposes. A uniform rubric was used by the evaluators:

- 10-9 Extraordinary
- 8-7 Superior
- 6-5 Competent
- 4-3 Adequate
- 2-1 Mediocre

Of seventy-nine graduating seniors, we received fifty-six responses. Faculty gave eleven of these students Extraordinary status. Three of those students were rated as the strongest graduating seniors in the two evaluative categories (analytical skills and writing skills). Faculty rated thirty-eight students as having Superior skills in the two categories, with fifteen students given 8's and twenty-three given 7's. Faculty found four of the 56 graduates to be in the Competent range. Three of those were given 6's. Four graduates were assigned 4's, placing them in the Adequate range. No students were assigned below a 4.



Lane, Lyons, Madison, Montgomery 2015

These findings do not indicate a need for changes to be made to our undergraduate English major; however, we are in the process of adding to our present form of assessment. We used to administer a standardized test every two years to a random subset of English B.A. graduating seniors, but it became impossible to convince a representative sample of students to take the test. It was financially impractical for us to administer the expensive test to the entire graduating class, so we did not see how we could call it a requirement for graduation. Because our Director of Undergraduate Studies has been on emergency leave since December 2014, we were unable to solve this conundrum in time for this spring's assessment; however, we have put one of our advisors on summer pay (for one month) to research the possibility of adding a new component to our assessment in the future, perhaps in the form of a less expensive test that actually would be a requirement for graduation.

Appendix B: Assessment Instructions

Hello Graduate!

Congratulations on achieving your goal of graduating from our Department of English undergraduate program. We are incredibly proud of you because we know of the rigorous challenges you have met and how hard you worked to get to this point.

Now that you have arrived, we need for you to complete one final task, in order to fulfill your **senior assessment requirement**. As mentioned in the *U of A Catalogue of Studies*, all graduating seniors are required to participate in a “senior assessment.” This year the assessment takes the form of an exam, which has been designed to test your knowledge from the courses all English majors are required to take (the survey courses and Shakespeare).

We’ve tried to make this process as simple as possible for you.

1. When you applied for graduation, we added your id number to the roster of a special Blackboard “course,” **Proficiency in English Assessment**. (Note: this isn’t really a course; it is just the easiest way for us to facilitate the exam.)
2. **By April 30**, you will take the Respondus on-line exam, as well as a three-question survey. You will find a short sample exam and the directions for uploading the Respondus Lockdown Browser onto your own computer on the Blackboard “class” page (for those with webcams. You can easily uninstall it after the exam, if you wish.) The list of labs on campus that have Respondus Lockdown Browsers installed (PC’s with webcams) are located in the following locations:

Mullins Library Computer Lab
 Arkansas Union Lab
 JB Hunt Computer Lab

The Student Technology Center (STC) at the Union has these items for checkout:

Webcams
 Laptops
 Headsets

*Don’t forget to take your student ID to checkout items at the STC and there are lab operators available if you have any questions about the equipment.

Should you have technical difficulties in downloading the Respondus Lockdown Monitor or taking the exam, contact:

Help Desk

479-575-6804

bbhelp@uark.edu

Help Desk Hours

Monday through Thursday, 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Friday, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Saturday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sunday, 4 to 11 p.m.

3. After you complete the exam, the assessment portion of your senior assessment requirement will be satisfied. (Note: The exam will need to be completed **by April 30**. If you don't complete the exam by that time, your assessment requirement will not be met, and you will not qualify for graduation. Should you apply for graduation late, please contact us at engladv@uark.edu so we can allow you access to the exam.)

The exam consists of thirty multiple choice questions that most will find easily answered in fifteen minutes, although we are allowing extended time for those who require it. We will score the exams, and then we will compile the information (without using your names) for a general assessment report about your graduating class.

This exam will not affect your GPA, nor will the results be used against you in any way. It isn't necessary to try to study or cram for the exam, either. Really, this exam is to assess how well our courses are teaching you. We do ask that you make an honest, good faith effort to try to perform well on the exam, however, as your results will be very valuable to us as a metric of the success of our curriculum.

We wish to assure you that this requirement is absolutely necessary for our accreditation—that is, for the Department of Higher Education to certify that your degree comes from an academically reputable institution and department.

Regards,

Dr. K. Madison

Appendix C: Sample Questions

Proficiency in English Exam, Spring 2017 (Sample 15 of 30 questions)

1. Which poet is widely viewed to have inherited the mantle of W.B. Yeats?
 - a. Eavan Boland
 - b. Paul Muldoon
 - c. **Seamus Heaney**
 - d. Geoffrey Hill
 - e. Les Murray

2. Which of the following best describes the genre of Paradise Lost?
 - a. Romance
 - b. Epyllion
 - c. Alexandrine
 - d. **Epic**
 - e. Parable

3. T. S. Eliot is not the author of
 - a. **“The Idea of Order at Key West.”**
 - b. “The Hollow Men.”
 - c. “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock.”
 - d. “The Waste Land.”
 - e. “Ash Wednesday.”

4. Beowulf wrestled with
 - a. Hrothgar.
 - b. Dracula.
 - c. Smaug.
 - d. **Grendel.**
 - e. Olaf.

5. My Ántonia is a novel written by
 - a. F. Scott Fitzgerald
 - b. Toni Morrison.
 - c. Christopher Marlowe.
 - d. Flannery O'Connor.
 - e. **Willa Cather.**

6. Of what poetic form is Dylan Thomas's "Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night" a classic example?
 - a. Elegiac stanza
 - c. Sestina
 - b. Sonnet
 - d. **Villanelle**
 - e. Sonnet

7. Stories associated with King Arthur and his court belong to the Matter of
 - a. **Britain.**
 - b. France.
 - c. Antiquity.
 - d. England.
 - e. Wales.

8. Beowulf is set in
 - a. **Scandinavia.**
 - b. Anglo-Saxon England.
 - c. Germany.
 - d. Ireland.
 - e. France

9. During what time period did the English Renaissance take place (assuming it actually occurred)?
 - a. First to fourth centuries
 - b. Fifth to fourteenth centuries
 - c. **Fifteenth to Seventeenth centuries**
 - d. Eighteenth and Nineteenth centuries
 - e. Twentieth century

10. On which river does The Heart of Darkness begin?
- a. **Thames**
 - b. Niger
 - c. Nile
 - d. Brahmaputra
 - e. Congo
11. Which of the following is credited with introducing blank verse on the Elizabethan stage?
- a. William Shakespeare
 - b. Ben Jonson
 - c. John Webster
 - d. Elizabeth I
 - e. **Christopher Marlowe**
12. Which one of the following was abducted from Africa and sold as a slave in colonial Massachusetts?
- a. Anne Bradstreet
 - b. Leatherstocking
 - c. Jesse Helm
 - d. **Phillis Wheatley**
 - e. Edward Taylor

13. A Room of One's Own features Woolf's narrative of
- Alfred Hitchcock.
 - Judith Shakespeare.**
 - Orlando Woolf.
 - Judith Butler.
 - the English Civil War.
14. "Orientalism" refers to the stereotypical way that Western literature has traditionally depicted the culture of Asia and the Middle East. Who coined this term?
- Lionel Trilling
 - Virginia Woolf
 - Edward Said**
 - Frantz Fanon
 - Gertrude Stein
15. The First Folio is
- the Italian source of Shakespeare's Roman and Juliet
 - a collection of Shakespeare's plays produced after his death by two actor friends**
 - the "Bad Folio" of Hamlet, containing many misattributions of lines and nonsensical lines
 - the theory that Shakespeare's plays were written by Queen Elizabeth's prime minister, the Earl of Leicester.
 - what Portia mockingly calls the Prince of Morocco in The Merchant of Venice.

Appendix D: Testing Sample Statement

Graduating Seniors Testing Sample Statement*

According to Gary Gunderman, Director of Institutional Research and Assessment, populations of 100 or less are difficult to get a picture of using a sample, but he does not think it is feasible to shoot for a confidence level of 95% and confidence interval of five. That would require a sample of 49 [Ours is 50]. We have to consider what is manageable for the test administrators, graders and students as well as what is financially possible.

Gunderman chose a margin of error of 15% and a confidence level of 90% with a population of 100, which gives a sample size of 24, which he thinks are at least respectable numbers.

Those are not exactly confidence numbers we would want to put in a dissertation, he says, but the purpose of assessing learning outcomes is to provide feedback to the department on what can/should be changed about what they are doing in regards to student learning.

If the results support what our faculty is actually seeing in the classrooms, then we can have more confidence in the results and make changes to improve future scores. If the results do not support what faculty is seeing in the classrooms, then maybe we would want to look at the results more critically and make changes the next time we do the assessment.

*Adapted from an email statement to Karen Lentz Madison from Gary Gunderman (21 October 2016), Director of Institutional Research and Assessment

Appendix E: Teaching Excellence Survey

Teaching Excellence Survey for Graduating Seniors

Created by and Administered for the English Department TES Committee

1. I have learned how to write better from my English courses.

yes

no

2. b. I have developed critical thinking skills from my English courses.

yes

no

3. I received excellent instruction from the following teachers in the English department

(Write in name/s.)

Appendix F: Student Correspondence

Hello,

First of all, thanks for taking the exam and teaching survey that will be used to evaluate the Department's programs and goals. We do understand that some of you think it was a waste of your time to do these tasks, but the exam, at least, is part of the major's requirement, and in the past, actually was used to quantify the individuals talking it, rather than to "examine" the Department itself as to how well it is achieving its purpose.

Assessment Requirement: Every senior English major must take the program assessment exam administered by the department each spring semester to graduate. Exam results will not affect GPA, although the student's score will be noted on his or her permanent academic record. This requirement may be waived in extraordinary circumstances by the department's Director of Undergraduate Studies. Contact your adviser for more information.

While not being noted on your academic record as the catalogue states, the Assessment Committee will correlate your score with additional qualitative data, such as your Major GPA (which takes into account knowledge, research abilities, participation, your Senior Writing Assessment--another requirement for graduation) and your status (last semester senior). We hope the comparison provides a more comprehensive profile of you as a student, and to offset aberrations in test scores. In future years, the Department hopes to measure other significant factors relating to retention, graduate school acceptance, or job placement, for example.

Our rationale for choosing such a protocol is based on our extensive examination of a variety of methods (one being a portfolio). However, the other forms were very expensive with no proof of a better outcome for what we are seeking. Unfortunately, we did not have the funding or faculty for those other forms of assessment. Even if we could afford to compensate them, asking the same faculty who evaluated your course work to also oversee your indirect assessment process would have undermined the results in the eyes of our report's intended audience. The Department is required to assess its program for the Dean's Office and, in turn, for University accreditation purposes.

And so, we did ask faculty to contribute questions that each thought were important or interesting enough to remember from their survey courses (British, American, and World Literature) and our Introduction to Shakespeare Course. The Assessment Committee went through all of the questions sent us, coding each one as the four just mentioned--but also as diversity questions and as questions we considered extremely difficult.

From those, we chose five diversity related questions, five difficult questions, five American Literature questions, five Shakespeare questions, five British Literature questions, and five World Literature questions. You took an exam with thirty questions. We gave everyone ten incorrect answers *gratis* to mitigate testing glitches (those aberrations in test scores I mentioned earlier).

The PIES Exam is not a perfect system. We've had people with poor marks and those with perfect scores. But it is our first year for this particular task, and we plan to use what we learn to address ways in which our curriculum might better meet all of our students' needs. The assessment is not of the students but of the Department itself, and we could not assess ourselves on how we are doing without an assessment tool, such as our exam.

We trust that this email answers your questions and addresses your concerns, and we genuinely hope that the rest of your semester goes smoothly.

Yours truly,
Dr. Madison and Ms. Lyons

Appendix G: Offset Margin

While not being noted on the students' academic records as the catalogue states, the Assessment Committee correlated their scores with additional qualitative data, such as their Major GPA (which takes into account knowledge, research abilities, participation, the Senior Writing Assessment--another requirement for graduation) and their status (last semester senior).

The comparison serves to provide a more comprehensive profile of each student, and to offset aberrations in test scores. In future years, the Department hopes to measure other significant factors relating to retention, graduate school acceptance, or job placement, for example.

The committee asked faculty to contribute questions that each thought were important or interesting enough to remember from their survey courses (British, American, and World Literature) and our Introduction to Shakespeare Course. The Committee went through all of the questions sent us, coding each one as the four just mentioned--but also as diversity questions and as questions we considered extremely difficult.

From those, we chose five diversity related questions, five difficult questions, five American Literature questions, five Shakespeare questions, five British Literature questions, and five World Literature questions. The students took an exam with thirty questions. We gave each one ten incorrect answers *gratis* to mitigate testing glitches or aberrations in test scores.

Appendix H: Suggested Catalogue Emendations

The Committee suggests either of two strategies that the Department can implement to avoid confusion and resentment (see Appendix E) by updating our assessment requirement in the University Catalogue of Studies. The first acknowledges that the assessment is not noted on a permanent record:

Assessment Requirement: Every senior English major must take the program assessment exam administered by the department each spring semester to graduate. Exam results will not affect GPA, although the student's score will be noted on his or her permanent academic record. This requirement may be waived in extraordinary circumstances by the department's Director of Undergraduate Studies. Contact your adviser for more information.

The Committee suggests that the faculty adapt the requirement to read:

Assessment Requirement: Final-semester English majors must take the **Proficiency in English Studies** program assessment exam **when administered by the department** during spring semesters to graduate. Exam results will not affect **the student's GPA or permanent record. However, the student's score will augment the Department's on-going curriculum assessment endeavors.** This requirement may be waived in extraordinary circumstances by the department's Director of Undergraduate Studies. ~~Contact your adviser for more information.~~

On the other hand, if the student's score on the PIES exit exam actually were to be noted (which it is not at present) on a permanent record, students would take the exam seriously, as opposed to hurrying to complete it, which we suspect is the case with more than one of our students.

Annual Academic Assessment Report
M.A. and Ph.D. Programs in English
June 1, 2019

Results of Analysis of Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

Assessment data regarding M.A. and Ph.D. students' comprehensive/candidacy exams, thesis/dissertation defenses, professional presentations and publications, and job placement indicate that the M.A. and Ph.D. Programs in English are achieving all six student learning outcomes and accomplishing all three program goals. (For descriptions of the program goals, student learning outcomes, and means of assessment, see the attached Academic Assessment Plan, originally submitted spring of 2015 and updated June 2019.)

1. Exams and Defenses

During the last eight years (from the fall of 2011 through the spring of 2019), 86 M.A. students and 55 Ph.D. students completed their programs and graduated. During this time 51 M.A. students successfully defended a thesis to graduate, 19 M.A. students passed the M.A. comprehensive exam to graduate, and 15 students took a Portfolio Workshop course, taught by Dr. Lisa Hinrichsen, and presented M.A. portfolios as their final degree projects. (The portfolio option has now replaced the comprehensive exam option.) Since 2015, M.A. students choosing the thesis option also have had their thesis prospectuses reviewed and approved before being allowed to start writing their theses. Ph.D. students have always been required to write and successfully defend dissertations to graduate. Before being allowed to start their dissertations, these students must also pass a written candidacy exam in a broad area of specialization and an oral candidacy exam in a narrower area that anticipates their dissertation topics. Overall, students' successful completion of M.A. comprehensive exams, M.A. prospectuses/theses, M.A. portfolios, Ph.D. candidacy exams, and Ph.D. prospectuses/dissertations indicates that the M.A. and Ph.D. Programs in English are achieving Student Learning Outcomes 1 and 2 and Program Goal 1.

The average time to degree for Ph.D. students who graduated during the last eight years (from the fall of 2011 through the spring of 2019) was approximately 18 semesters (6 years), and the average time to degree for M.A. students who graduated during this time was approximately 9 semesters (3 years). It is important to note, however, that the average time to degree for the 57 graduating M.A. students who *started* their M.A. course work in the last eight years (i.e., started Fall 2011 or after) was approximately 6 semesters (2 years). When the directors of the M.A. and Ph.D. programs started coordinating the programs in the fall of 2011, they took steps to reconnect with students who had started the M.A. program prior to 2009 but not yet completed their theses/comprehensive exams, advising approximately 11 of these students to degree completion and graduation.

Although the graduation of previously discontinued students was a positive development for the department as well as the students, their graduation increased the average time to degree for students who completed the M.A. program over the last eight years. Overall, the average time to degree for students completing the Ph.D. program indicates that the Ph.D. program is achieving Student Learning Outcome 5 and Program Goal 3. Now that we have new M.A. degree requirements in place (officially approved in 2016), allowing our M.A. students to complete a portfolio project in lieu of a thesis, we anticipate continuing to see an improvement in the average time to degree for our M.A. students in the coming years.

2. Presentations, Publications, Honors, and Job Placement

During the last six years (from the spring of 2013 through the spring of 2019), students in the M.A. and Ph.D. programs presented papers (or gave talks) and published scholarship on a diverse group of authors and a wide range of literary, cultural, linguistic, and theoretical areas. During this time current M.A. and Ph.D. students presented conference papers or gave professional talks over 200 times and published (or have forthcoming) 34 articles, book chapters, dictionary entries, or creative writing pieces. Of special note is that four of the papers received outstanding-presentation-at-conference awards from the sponsoring organizations (the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, the Carson McCullers Society, the College English Association, and the Popular Culture Association / American Culture Association). Overall, the students' significant level of scholarly contribution indicates that the M.A. and Ph.D. programs are achieving Student Learning Outcomes 3 and 4 and Program Goal 1.

Our M.A. and Ph.D. students over the last five years also have had the high quality of their scholarship and their serious dedication to the discipline acknowledged in a range of ways. Honors that they have received outside of the Department of English include 7 James J. Hudson Doctoral Fellowships (awarded by the Graduate School), 4 Fulbright College Dissertation Research Awards, 1 R.D. Mullen Fellowship through the International Association for the Fantastic in the Arts (to fund archival research at the John Hay Library at Brown University), 1 American Dissertation Fellowship through the American Association of University of Women, 1 National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute Fellowship, acceptance to a one-week summer Futures of American Studies Institute at Dartmouth College, 3 African and African American Studies Graduate Fellowships, 1 travel award to attend the 2018 MMLA Conference in Kansas City (Midwest Modern Language Association), 1 travel award for an outstanding conference proposal (Center for the Study of Genders and Sexualities), 1 travel award for the Computers and Writing Graduate Research Network, 2 travel awards to attend the annual College English Association's conference, 1 award from the Delaware Tribe of Indians Education Program, 1 fellowship to the Sweetland Digital Rhetoric Collaborative, 1 Chancellor's Community Service Award (University of Arkansas), 1 Alex Marino Service Award (from the Graduate Student Congress), and 5 elections/appointments to officer/member positions for regional or national organizations (member of the Bedford New Scholars Advisory Board for The English Community, The

Macmillan Community (<https://community.macmillan.com/>; secretary and chair of the Nineteenth-Century Literature Committee for the South Central Modern Language Association; Midwest Region's Director of Communications for the National Association of Graduate-Professional Students; Board of Directors for the Vagantes Conference on Medieval Studies; Digital Media Director for the Society for the Study of Southern Literature; and member of the Graduate Student Committee for the Medieval Academy of America).

Since 2013, we have also had 18 incoming doctoral students awarded Doctoral Academy Fellowships by the Graduate School and 7 incoming doctoral students awarded Distinguished Doctoral Fellowships by the Graduate School. For those doctoral students planning to begin their program this fall (of 2019), 2 have already been awarded Distinguished Doctoral Fellowships and 2 have already been awarded Doctoral Academy Fellowships.

Students completing the M.A. and Ph.D. programs during the last eleven years (since the spring of 2007) have gone on to pursue a range of programs and positions after graduation. At least 47 of our M.A. graduates have been accepted to or gone on to start Ph.D. programs (the University of Arkansas, Indiana University at Bloomington, the University of North Texas, the University of Tennessee, Purdue University, University of Kentucky, Texas A&M, Vanderbilt University, University of Kansas, Oklahoma State University, Georgia State University, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and Arizona State University). One will be starting law school at the University of Arkansas the fall of 2019. One went on to complete a second M.A. at Auburn University. (I believe she was initially planning to pursue her Ph.D. there but stopped after completing her second M.A.) One M.A. graduate has gone on to attend Harvard Law School. At least 6 M.A. graduates have gone on to pursue a master's degree in library science (at Rutgers University, the University of Oklahoma, the University of Alabama, and LSU) or to work in a library system. Approximately 8-9 M.A. graduates have gone on to work as college English instructors (note that not all are still working in those positions). And at least 19 of them have gone on to pursue an M.A.T., teach abroad (China), and/or work in a public or private school system as a secondary English teacher, a primary teacher, an ESL teacher, a substitute teacher, or a teacher's aide. In addition, our M.A. graduates have secured employment with institutions, organizations, and companies like the following:

- ACGME in Chicago, IL (Accreditation Standards Senior Administrator)
- AICPA in Raleigh-Durham, NC (Communications Manager – Tax)
- Alma School District (English Teacher)
- ArcBest (Director, Customer Solutions)
- Alexandria Library in Alexandria, VA (Children's Librarian)
- Arkansas Leadership Academy, University of Arkansas (Administrative Support Supervisor)

- Arkansas Teacher Corps (Teacher at Lee County High School in Mariana, AR)
- Arkansas Tech University (Adjunct Faculty)
- Asheville-Buncombe Technical College (English Instructor)
- Barre 3 (Owner)
- B-Unlimited in Fayetteville, AR (Director of People and Culture)*
- Berryville Public Library in Berryville, AR (Library Associate)
- Bentonville High School (English Teacher)
- Bookish, an Independent Bookstore in Fort Smith, AR (Co-Owner)*
- Business Communication Lab, Walton College of Business (Tutor Coordinator)
- Business Services (Vice-Chancellor's Office) at the University of Arkansas (Travel Analyst)
- California State University Long Beach (Assistant Professor – This M.A. graduate completed his Ph.D. at Texas A&M University.)
- Central Arkansas Christian Schools (Pre-K through 3rd Grade Teacher)
- City of Fayetteville (Sustainability Coordinator)
- Colegio Granadino in Colombia (English Teacher)
- Community Clinic of Northwest Arkansas in Springdale, AR (Communications Manager)
- Dell Medical School at UT-Austin (Associate Director for Strategic Content and Creative Services as well as Editor, *Rethink: New Perspectives on Health*)
- Department of Political Science, University of Arkansas (Administrative Specialist)
- Episcopal School of Dallas (Communications Associate)*
- Environmental Defense Fund in Bentonville (4-month, full-time, paid technical writing internship)*
- Fayetteville High School (English Teacher)
- Graduate School and International Education at the University of Arkansas (Compliance Officer)
- Gravette High School (English Teacher)
- Haas Hall Academy in Bentonville, AR (English Teacher)
- Heifer International (Manager of Donor Engagement)
- Hemingway-Pfeiffer Museum and Educational Center (Director)
- Honors College, University of Arkansas (Director of Retention and Student Advising)
- J.B. Hunt Transport, Inc. (Corporate HR Business Partner)*
- J.B. Hunt Transport, Inc. (Content Marketing Specialist)*
- JJ's Beer Garden & Brewing Co. (Trivia Host and Creator)*
- Kroger in Nashville, TN (Associate Communications and Engagement Manager)
- KUAF (Membership Director)
- Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts (English Teacher)
- Marian Middle School (English Teacher)
- Marion Military Institute in Marion, AL (English Instructor)
- Miss Liang English School in Taiwan (ESL Teacher)
- Mohawk College (Instructor)
- Mullins Library, University of Arkansas (Professional Assistant I)

- National Writing Project College-Ready Writers Program (Director)
- The New School in Fayetteville, AR (Full-Time Substitute)
- New Leaf Publishing Group (Assistant Editor)
- New Student and Family Programs at the University of Arkansas (Office Manager)
- Northern Oklahoma College (Language Arts Instructor)
- Northport School District (Teacher's Aide)
- Northwest Arkansas Community College (English Instructor)
- Office of Student Involvement and Orientation at Rockford University in Rockford, IL
- Office of University Development at the University of Arkansas (Administrative Records Analyst – Records and Data Services)
- Program in Rhetoric and Composition, University of Arkansas (Adjunct Teaching Faculty)
- Rockford University (IL) (Dir. of First Year Programs and Career Services)*
- Rogers Heritage High School in Rogers, AR (Social Studies Teacher)
- Rogers Public Library (full-time position)*
- Science and Engineering Magnet High School in Dallas, TX (AP Teacher)
- Sims Memorial Library, Southeastern Louisiana University (Reference/Instruction Librarian)
- Southern Arkansas University (Registrar's Assistant/Software Support Technician)*
- St. Mark's Episcopal School in Houston, TX (6th Grade Language Arts Teacher)
- SVI (Content Manager and Client Champion)
- Texarkana College (Adjunct English Faculty)
- Tyson Foods, Inc., in Springdale, AR (Video Production Manager)
- United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit in El Dorado, AR (Judicial Law Clerk – This student earned her J.D. at Harvard.)
- University Information Technology Services, University of Arkansas (Blackboard Support Specialist)
- University of Arkansas Career Development Center (Employer Relations Coordinator)*
- University of Arkansas New Student & Family Programs (Officer Manager)*
- University of Arkansas Press (Editorial Assistant)
- University of Arkansas (Travel Administrator)*
- University of Colorado-Colorado Springs (Systems and User Experience Librarian & Assistant Professor, Web Services and Emerging Technologies, Kraemer Family Library)
- University of North Carolina—Greensboro's School of Nursing (Communications and Marketing Specialist)*
- Waitr (Delivery Driver)*
- Walmart (Manager, Digital Strategy and Brand Engagement)*
- Walton Arts Center (Development Coordinator)
- Walton College Honors Program (Academic Adviser and Scholarship Coordinator)
- Washington Junior High School (English Teacher)
- Wayne State University (Digital Publishing Librarian)

Note: For around 20-25 of our M.A. alumni who have graduated in the last 12 years, including those who just graduated Spring 2019, we have not yet been able to confirm any post-graduation graduate school/job information. In addition, the positions above may reflect multiple positions held by the same M.A. graduate. Finally, not all of the M.A. alumni who have secured positions with the above employers are still working in those offices.

In the last 12 years (since the summer of 2007), over 30 of our Ph.D. graduates have been hired for and/or promoted to assistant professor, associate professor, or other professor/tenure-track positions at the following domestic and international institutions. These alumni, as far as we know, are still/currently working, or will be by fall, in all of these positions. Those with asterisks are the most recent hires or promotions made within the last year.)

- Alanya University (Turkey) – assistant professor
- Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College (GA) – assistant professor
- Appalachian State (NC) – assistant chair of department and director of comp/rhet program
- Ball State University (IN) – assistant teaching professor
- Boise State University (ID) – assistant professor
- Butler Community College (KS) – assistant professor
- Cottey College (MO) – writing center director and assistant professor*
- Dalton State College (GA) - assistant professor*
- East West University (Bangladesh) – associate professor*
- Ferum College (VA) - associate professor
- Georgia Gwinnett College (GA) – assistant professor
- Howard Payne University (TX) – assistant professor
- Lander University (SC) – assistant professor
- Missouri State University – assistant professor
- Oklahoma Baptist University – 1 assistant professor and 1 associate professor*
- San Jacinta College (TX) – English professor
- San Jose State University – assistant professor
- Texas A&M – assistant professor
- Texas A&M University-Qatar – instructional assistant professor
- Ulsan University (South Korea) – assistant professor
- University of Arkansas-Fort Smith – 2 associate professors
- University of Central Oklahoma – assistant professor
- University of Southern Mississippi-Gulf Park – assistant teaching professor
- University of the Ozarks (AR) – 1 assistant* professor and 1 associate professor
- Volunteer State Community College (TN) – assistant professor
- West Virginia University – assistant professor
- Westfield State University (MA) – assistant professor

- Williams Baptist College (AR) – assistant professor
- Yarmouk University (Jordan) – 2 assistant professors

In addition, since 2007, at least 18 of our Ph.D. graduates have been hired for non-tenure-track or secondary education positions with the following institutions and are still/currently working, or will be by fall, with these employers. Those with asterisks are the most recent hires, made within the last year.

- Arkansas High School in Texarkana – 11th-grade English teacher
- Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences, and the Arts in Hot Springs – humanities instructor
- Auburn University (AL) – lecturer
- Baldwin School (PA) – chair of computer science and dean of academic affairs
- Bilkent University (Turkey) – lecturer
- Colorado State University – instructor
- Hung Vuong Specialized High School in Binh Duong province (Vietnam) – instructor*
- King's High School (WA) – English instructor
- LISA Academy (AR) – English department chair
- Louisiana State University - instructor
- Northeastern State University (OK) – part-time faculty
- Richland College (TX) – English faculty member
- University of Albany – lecturers (2)
- University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, Department of English – instructor and asst. dir. of graduate program
- University of Arkansas-Fort Smith – adjunct English faculty
- University of Mississippi – instructor
- Western Governors University (online, I believe) – writing center non-tenure-track faculty

Finally, since 2007, at least 7 of our Ph.D. graduate have been hired for nonteaching, administrative, or alternative-academic (alt-ac) positions that they are still/currently holding with the following offices, organizations, and institutions:

- Harper Collins Christian (TN) – acquisitions editor
- Inhab Real Estate (LA) – broker
- Interrobang (AR) – founder and lead storyteller
- Office of Nationally Competitive Awards (University of Arkansas, Fayetteville) – director of communications
- Ozarks Technical Community College (MO) - dean of academic and student affairs
- Transportation Security Administration (VA) – writer/editor
- University Information Technology Services (University of Arkansas, Fayetteville) – senior virtualization engineer

Note: For approximately 14 of our Ph.D. alumni who graduated in the last 12 years (not including those who just graduated this spring of 2019), we have not been able to confirm current information.

Overall, the students' successful level of placement into teaching positions, nonteaching or alt-ac positions, and new degree programs indicates that the M.A. and Ph.D. programs are achieving Student Learning Outcome 6 and Program Goal 2.

3. External Committee Review

In the spring of 2013, an external committee of three faculty members in English from other institutions visited the English Department and reviewed all its programs, including the M.A. and Ph.D. Programs in English. The external committee's report included two important suggestions about the M.A. program: 1) that its "coverage model at the graduate level, however commendable in principle, may be out of sync with national trends in the discipline and with the current TT faculty size," and 2) that the department should consider (also because of national trends and tenure-track faculty size) "eliminating the M.A. thesis requirement and, perhaps, substituting for this requirement a seminar or workshop in revising seminar papers into journal articles" or "scholarly papers that might be included in applications for doctoral programs." Our new M.A. program (approved in 2016) responds to both critiques, through 1) offering the option of a specialist or generalist track, and 2) presenting an alternative to the traditional M.A. thesis in the form of a portfolio project and workshop class.

Any Changes to Degree/Certificate Planned or Made on the Basis of the Assessment and Analysis

The English Department routinely folds new assessment results into the administration of its graduate programs and has been using the above results in a variety of ways to continue monitoring and strengthening the M.A. and Ph.D. Programs in English. For example, in considering the external committee review, the department formed a Graduate Reform Committee of eight faculty members and one M.A. student, and the committee revised the degree structure of the M.A. program to include a generalist concentration as well as a new specialist concentration, a thesis option as well as a new portfolio option, a portfolio workshop course required for students who choose the portfolio option, and an introduction to graduate studies course required of all incoming M.A. students. These revisions to the M.A. program, approved by the university in 2016, have made the structure of the program more flexible and more in line with current best practices and the size of the faculty in English. In particular, the option to complete a portfolio for the program's final research project and the addition of a portfolio workshop course (offered for the first time in the spring semester of 2018) is already beginning to help more of our M.A. students complete their degrees in a more timely fashion. In the first class of M.A. students offered this option, 8 out of 11 chose the portfolio option and

completed the M.A. degree program in 5 semesters, graduating in the spring of 2018. In the second class of M.A. students offered this option, 7 out of 10 chose the portfolio option and completed the M.A. degree in 5 semesters, graduating in the spring of 2019.

Moreover, the department has started offering multiple graduate-level courses focusing heavily, if not primarily, on professionalization and career options (both within and outside the conventional path of teaching/academia):

- **Article Writing Workshop** (taught during the August Intersession by Jo Hsu)
- **Introduction to Graduate Studies** (taught each fall by Sean Dempsey)
- **Job Market Workshop: Academic, Alt-Ac, Post-Ac** (taught every other year by Lissette Szwydky)

We are also now offering a course (Graduate Internship in English) through which the department can facilitate graduate internships in areas such as grant writing, editing (e.g., with the university press), publishing, helping with special collections work (in the library), and assisting with university administration (specifically, university residential programming for undergraduates planning to major or minor in English). This course also allows graduate students to seek internship opportunities off campus with start-up companies (e.g., Finding NWA) or city offices (e.g., the City of Fayetteville's Sustainability Department). Two of our M.A. students participated in the graduate internship course during the 2017-2018 school year. Six of our M.A. students participated in the graduate internship course during the 2018-2019 school year.

Furthermore, the English graduate advisors and the Graduate Students in English organization (GSE) have been considering assessment results in planning and implementing extracurricular workshops and other activities for English M.A. and Ph.D. students. For example, the placement of M.A. and Ph.D. graduates into a balance of secondary-level teaching positions and non-teaching or corporate positions (see above) is positive confirmation that this focus upon careers outside, as well as inside, academia is helping students respond productively to the current state of the academic job market in the humanities. Extracurricular professionalization activities offered to our graduate students just in the past year have included the following:

Professionalization Events that Took Place Fall 2018:

- **Tues., Oct. 2nd, at 5:00 p.m.** - Speaker Panel Event: "Graduate Internships" - Champions Hall 413
- **Wed., Oct. 10th, at 9:00 a.m.** - Guest Speaker Q&A: Dr. Joseph Fruscione, author of *Succeeding Outside of the Academy*, spoke to graduate students by Skype - Kimpel 339
- **Fri., Oct. 19th, at 4:00 p.m.** - Guest Speaker Q&A: Dr. Jaime Harker, author of *The Lesbian South: Southern Feminists, the Women in Print Movement, and the Queer Literary Canon*, spoke to students - Kimpel 214

- **Tues., Oct. 23rd, at 11:30 a.m.** - Pedagogy Lunch Series: Dr. Jo Hsu presented on developing an Article Writing Workshop course - Kimpel 116
- **Tues., Nov. 6th, 2:00 p.m.** - GSE-Sponsored Event: "Learn How to Manage Stress in Graduate School" - Kimpel 407
- **Tues., Nov. 13th, 5:00 p.m.** - Speaker Panel Event: "Finding a Career in University Education with Your Graduate Degree in English" - Champions Hall 413

Professionalization Events that Took Place Spring 2019:

- **March 1st (Fri.), 1:00-2:00 p.m., Kimpel 321** – Graduate advisors met with third- and fourth-year Ph.D. students to talk about their preparing to go on the job market Fall 2019.
- **March 9th (Sat.), 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., 2nd floor of Kimpel** – GSE-sponsored Graduate Student Conference, "Open Doors: Creating Opportunities for Difficult Conversations," took place.
- **March 12th (Tues.), 12:30-1:30 p.m., Kimpel 321** - Pedagogy Lunch Series Event - A panel of graduate TAs discussed their Comp II special topics courses, giving guidance to those graduate TAs who were interested in submitting special topics course proposals for Spring 2020.
- **April 2nd (Tues.), Champions Hall 423** – Two professionalization events took place this day, both offered as part of the Portfolio Workshop class but open to everyone in the department: **11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.** - Erin Durrah (from the Career Development Center) presented on "How to Create a Stand-Out Resume and Cover Letter"; **12:45 p.m.-1:45 p.m.** - Vicky Hartwell (from the Graduate School) talked about "Graduate Student Funding Opportunities" (awards, fellowships, and prizes, etc.).
- **April 9th (Tues.), 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., Champions Hall 423** – Six M.A. students spoke, as part of a panel, about their experiences with their internships.
- **May 2nd (Thurs.), 6:00-7:00 p.m., Kimpel 321** - GSE-sponsored talk by Ph.D. alum ("Navigating Early Aspects of an Academic Career: A Conversation") took place.

The Director and Assistant Director of the M.A. and Ph.D. programs have also been using the assessment results to improve strategies for advising students and disseminating information about the programs. For example, within the last few years, the directors have developed (in consultation with various IT and media specialists on campus) a new platform and new content for the department's website pages on the M.A. and Ph.D. programs, which will continue to be revised as we continue to balance our emphasis upon academic and alternative-academic professional preparation.

To support graduate students in completing their program on schedule, a new advising web page was added in 2015 that includes information on "M.A. Requirements and Timeline," "Ph.D. Requirements and Timeline," and "Exams, Prospectuses, and Reading Lists." (The last page now also includes information on preparing M.A. portfolios.) To encourage students to continue making significant scholarly contributions in their areas of research, new web pages were also

added in 2015 on “Graduate Student Awards, Publications, and Presentations” and “Professionalization Resources.” To continue supporting students in their preparation for professional careers inside or outside of academia, a new page on “Career Resources” was added.

To further assist our incoming graduate students as they begin their programs, we have developed a graduate student handbook, which thoroughly covers program requirements, resources, and information about faculty, as well as our programs’ process of evaluating graduate student progress. We revise and update this handbook on an annual basis.

To further assist our current and graduating students, as they consider their career options, we have (during the 2018-2019 school year) also started publishing a semi-annual graduate English alumni newsletter which features alumni professional news, alumni job placement, and interviews with alumni regarding their various work interests and endeavors.

To encourage the recruitment of a more diverse population of students to our M.A. and Ph.D. programs, the English graduate advisors have attended meetings hosted by the Office for Diversity and Inclusion, attended the Attracting Intelligent Minds (AIM) Conference (and visited with individual AIM participants), nominated an incoming graduate student for the RISE Bridge Program, and nominated outside faculty to participate in the Graduate Research Opportunities Forum (GROF).

Finally, to encourage more financial support for our incoming doctoral students, and supplement their teaching stipends, we regularly nominate qualified doctoral applicants for doctoral fellowships through the Graduate School. We also seek to locate, in the future, more financial assistance for our M.A. students by cultivating strategic partnerships with nearby industries, unique to the Northwest Arkansas area, that could lead to paid training opportunities or internships for our M.A. students and perhaps also alternative-academic full-time employment opportunities for both M.A. graduates and our Ph.D. graduates.

Any Changes to the Assessment Process Made or Planned

We plan to continue the assessment process we’ve been developing over the last several years, which we describe above. The advisors of the graduate English students will continue to collect data on average time to degree for our M.A. and Ph.D. students and job placement (in both academic and nonacademic careers), as well as track their annual numbers of awards, publications, conference presentations. We are also open to increasing our level of communication with personnel in other departments on campus as well as in off-campus offices/businesses within the Northwest Arkansas area to broaden the range of interdisciplinary research and, as mentioned above, increase the number of professional training opportunities our students can pursue to be as competitive as possible when they go on the job market.

Academic Assessment Plan

M.A. and Ph.D. Programs in English Originally Submitted Spring 2015 / Reviewed and Updated June 2019

- Program Goals
1. Students in the M.A. and Ph.D. programs should acquire specialized knowledge and develop academic skills in preparation for making scholarly contributions to their fields of research.
 2. M.A. and Ph.D. students should also gain professionalization skills and knowledge in preparation for going on the job market or applying to other graduate programs.
 3. M.A. and Ph.D. students should be able to complete their degrees in a timely fashion.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. M.A. students should be able to write and defend an original thesis of 50-75 pages or to defend a 50-75 portfolio of professional documents.
2. Ph.D. students should be able to write and defend an original dissertation of 250-350 pages and to pass a written candidacy exam covering a broad area of specialization as well as an oral candidacy exam covering a narrower research area.
3. M.A. and Ph.D. students should be able to develop, submit, and present papers for professional conferences.
4. Ph.D. students should also be able to develop, submit, and publish journal articles.
5. M.A. students should be able to complete their degrees within 2 years, and Ph.D. students should be able to complete their degrees within 5 years.
6. Graduating M.A. and Ph.D. students should be able to secure employment, or to pursue additional education, that will aid them in developing professional careers.

Process for Assessing Student Learning Outcomes

1. Timeline:

Assessment data regarding M.A. thesis defenses, M.A. portfolio projects, Ph.D. candidacy exams, and Ph.D. dissertation defenses are collected and analyzed throughout the year as the exams, portfolio projects, and defenses are scheduled. Data regarding M.A. and Ph.D. students' conference presentations and journal publications are collected and analyzed at the end of each year, as is information about the placement of graduating students into jobs and new degree programs. At the end of each year, an academic review report is also generated for, and sent to, each student. Additionally, in conjunction with university assessment efforts, an external committee evaluates the M.A. and Ph.D. programs every five years.

2. Means of Assessment:

An advisory committee of three faculty members assesses the portfolio project developed by each M.A. student who chooses the program's portfolio option.

An advisory committee of three faculty members assesses the thesis prospectus of each M.A. student who chooses the program's thesis option, and a thesis committee of three faculty members assesses the student's performance at his or her thesis defense.

An advisory committee of three faculty members assesses each Ph.D. student's knowledge of a broad area of specialization during the student's written candidacy exam.

An advisory committee of three faculty members assesses each Ph.D. student's knowledge of a narrow area of specialization, typically the area to be pursued by the student in his or her dissertation research, during the student's oral candidacy exam.

A dissertation committee of three faculty members assesses each Ph.D. student's performance at the student's dissertation defense.

The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) and Assistant Director of Graduate Studies (ADGS) collect and analyze assessment data about M.A. and Ph.D. students' conference presentations and journal publications.

The DGS and ADGS collect and analyze assessment data about the placement of graduating M.A. and Ph.D. students into jobs and new degree programs.

In preparing students' academic review reports, the DGS and ADGS assess each student's overall progress in completing program requirements (coursework in English studies, coursework and proficiency exams in foreign languages, portfolio projects and thesis defenses for M.A. students, candidacy exams and dissertation defenses for Ph.D. students). Each academic review report indicates whether a student is making satisfactory progress and, if not, what the student should do to make better progress, and the report is sent to the student as well as to the dean of the Graduate School. Reasons for a graduate student being marked as making unsatisfactory progress include their currently (at the time of the report) having an incomplete ("I") grade on their course work or being past their time to degree (six years for M.A. students and seven years for Ph.D. students).

Every five years, in conjunction with university assessment efforts, an external committee of three faculty members from English departments at other institutions evaluates the M.A. and Ph.D. programs and submits an assessment report to the department chair college dean.

3. Using and Reporting Results:

A graduate reform committee considers the assessment results in evaluating and revising the requirements and curricula for the M.A. and Ph.D. programs, and a graduate professionalization committee considers the results in planning and implementing professionalization activities for students in the programs. The department chair takes the results into consideration when scheduling and assigning graduate classes, and the DGS and ADGS use the results to improve their strategies for advising current students and for disseminating information about the M.A. and Ph.D. programs to current and prospective students. The DGS and ADGS are scheduled to submit a report on the program assessment findings and their applications to the department chair, college dean, and university provost by the end of June 2019.

Academic Program Assessment Report

M.F.A. Program in Creative Writing & Translation

Assessment Tools

As outlined in our Academic Program Assessment Plan, the Program in Creative Writing and Translation uses the following assessment tools for student learning outcomes:

- A combined thesis defense and oral examination.
- A yearly review of each student's academic progress toward the M.F.A. degree.
- An indirect review of our graduates' professional success via published works, national program rankings, and anecdotal evidence.

Assessment Results

Thesis defense/oral exams: As of May 3rd, 2019, 13 of the 14 M.F.A. students eligible to graduate this spring (one will graduate in August) had successfully written and defended a thesis manuscript that was deemed publishable by their thesis committees. Through oral examination, the committees were satisfied that graduating candidates were leaving the program with a broad knowledge of literature and technique.

Graduate success: Among the many accomplishments of our graduates this year,

- Jacob Shores-Arguello ('14) was awarded a prestigious \$100,000 Lannan Literary Prize in Poetry.
- Chelsea Rathburn ('01) was appointed Poet Laureate of Georgia by Governor Brian Kemp. This appointment marks a total of four Arkansas MFA graduates currently serving as state Poets Laureate: Jo McDougall in Arkansas, Beth Ann Fennelly in Mississippi, and Jack Bedell in Louisiana.
- Jo McDougall ('86) was awarded the 2019 Lifetime Achievement Award by the Porter Literary Prize for Arkansas Writers.
- Chloe Honum ('10) has received the Grimshaw Sargeson Fellowship, one of New Zealand's leading national literary awards.
- John Englehart ('13) won the Dzanc Books Prize for Fiction. His novel, BLOOMLAND will be published by Dznac in September.
- Allison Pelegrin's ('00), OUR LADY OF THE FLOOD was awarded first place in the Chapbook category of the Eric Hoffer Book Awards.
- Corrie Williamson's ('13) collection, THE RIVER WHERE YOU FORGOT MY NAME will be released this October through the Crab Orchard Series in Poetry.
- Josh Idaszak ('18) was the winner of the 2018 Maureen Egen Writers Exchange Award.

- Molly Bess Rector ('17) and Brody Parrish Craig ('17) received Practicing Artist grants, and Jennifer Bailey Hutchinson ('19) received a Student Artist grant from Artists 360 and the Mid-America Arts Alliance.
- Four recent graduates have secured jobs in with established publishing houses: Sasha Idell ('18) is Coeditor and Prose Editor of the *Southern Review*; Anthony Blake ('18) is the Marketing Director at Open Letter Books; Elizabeth DeMeo ('19) is an Assistant Editor at Tin House Books; and Jennifer Bailey Hutchinson ('19) begins an internship with Milkweed Editions in May.
- Sara Ramey ('19) has been awarded a Sturgis Fellowship to conduct research in Ireland this fall.
- Season 3 of *True Detective*, the series created and written by Nic Pizzolatto ('05) and filmed in Northwest Arkansas, debuted in early 2019 on HBO.
- Three 2019 graduates have been accepted to PhD programs to further their studies in the arts.

At least six books were published by alumni this year through distinguished publishing houses such as Algonquin, Black Lawrence Press, Louisiana State University Press, and Diode Editions.

And hundreds of poems, stories, novels, essays, and translations by graduates were published by well-known presses and in journals such as *Jubilat*, *Ploughshares*, *The Southern Review*, *The Indiana Review*, *Tin House*, and *Beloit*, among others.

Use of Results

Almost without exception, students in the M.F.A. program graduate within four years. These students produce publishable manuscripts, and many go on to prestigious post-graduate fellowships and residencies, as well as careers in teaching and writing.

In 2017, the Program in Creative Writing and Translation began teaching ENGL 2023, Creative Writing I, as a core course. Assessment data has consistently revealed that our student instructors are satisfactorily teaching the course according to stated student learning outcomes and are therefore gaining valuable teaching experience for their professional resumes.

Our literary journal, *The Arkansas International*, published its fifth and sixth issues. M.F.A. students comprise the editorial board of *The Arkansas International*, through which they're gaining significant professional experience in editing and publishing.

The achievements of our students and graduates helped our program secure an important new donor this year for the creation of the Nancy Saunders Award, which recognizes outstanding students and faculty members.

Item Statistics Report

Question		Summary Statistics				Descriptive Statistics				Percentiles				
Item	Sample Size	Excluded	Mean	Variance	Std. Dev.	Std. Error	Skewness	Kurtosis	T Value	Mean Abs. De	Percentile 25%	Median	Percentile 75%	Inter Quart. R.
Question1	77	0	4.32	1.04	1.02	0.12	-1.69	2.33	37.25	0.79	4	5.00	5	1
Question2	77	0	4.18	1.31	1.14	0.13	-1.45	1.33	32.08	0.89	4	5.00	5	1
Question3	77	0	4.34	1.25	1.12	0.13	-1.81	2.46	34.00	0.86	4	5.00	5	1
Question4	77	0	4.22	1.23	1.11	0.13	-1.71	2.49	33.44	0.83	4	5.00	5	1
Question5	77	0	4.22	1.12	1.06	0.12	-1.48	1.76	34.97	0.83	4	5.00	5	1
Question6	76	1	4.00	1.31	1.14	0.13	-0.94	0.04	30.51	0.92	3	4.00	5	2
Question7	76	1	3.95	1.38	1.18	0.13	-0.91	-0.17	29.25	0.94	3	4.00	5	2
Question8	75	2	4.15	1.37	1.17	0.14	-1.28	0.60	30.68	0.93	4	5.00	5	1

Academic Program Assessment Report Graduate Certificate in Technical Writing and Public Rhetorics

Director Adam Pope

Student Learning Outcomes

Students in the graduate certificate program should be able to demonstrate the following skills upon their graduation from the program:

- Analyze the rhetorical situation of professional and public writing tasks through theory-driven audience research and analysis
- Produce high-quality texts that meet the audience, medium, and genre needs of a given writing task
- Oversee and manage large-scale writing projects in the professional and public writing workplace
- Utilize industry-standard technology and techniques to produce texts for online and paper-based audiences
- Compile a portfolio of professional-quality texts from their coursework as evidence of their skill in technical writing
- Analyze technical information and synthesize texts that relay that information to audiences of varying levels of skill and proficiency in the subject matter
- Demonstrate an understanding of and ability to write in a variety of styles
- Leverage user-centered usability testing and textual editing skills to tailor a text for specific audiences and their needs

Assessment Tools

The Graduate Certificate program assesses students in two ways as they make their way towards graduation:

- End-of-semester assessment via capstone project
- End-of-certificate assessment via portfolio defense
- Student feedback on their own learning via end-of-course statements

Portfolio Defense

Each certificate student is required to present and defend a professional portfolio before graduation. The defense is normally chaired by the program director and assessed by the director and two members of the Rhetoric and Composition faculty. Students present and defend a minimum of four of their projects from the certificate program, explaining why the pieces presented are effective and the choices behind their creation.

End-of-semester Assessment

At the end of each semester, students are required to finish a capstone assignment for each major course. These capstone assignments are designed to be candidates for the final portfolio defense and to test students' ability to apply the content of the course in a professional setting. Through these end-of-semester submissions faculty in the program are able to check student's progress towards the certificate and offer guidance when necessary.

End of Course Assessments

Students are asked to self-report on their progress and achievements from each course as they make their way through the certificate. This feedback covers what students feel they have learned, what they would like to know more about, and what they feel they didn't feel as confident in.

Use of Assessment Results

This year, we have been piloting a new approach to feedback for students in an effort to give more timely feedback to students on weekly writing while also building editorial skills. In a pilot nursing graduate course in the program we tested a new approach that utilizes alternating weeks of peer feedback and instructor feedback. The peer feedback utilized Eli Review, a program we had previously attempted to use without success. The student feedback from the Eli usage in the Spring pilot was positive, and the program plans on utilizing it in all future courses in the coming academic year as a secondary pilot focused specifically at the Technical Writing Certificate students.

As part of an ongoing project to rebuild 5523, Technical Writing for Online Audiences, we have made some changes to content in the course, but plan on piloting some new software and instructional tools more extensively in Fall 2020. The Fall 2019 course section made use of open-source materials from the Mozilla Foundation for Box and Flexbox models in CSS, and student responses were favorable enough to support this continued revision and focus.