

Institutional Effectiveness
2019-2020

Program: English MA

College and Department: College of Arts & Sciences – Department of English

Contact: Linda Null

Mission: The English M.A. curriculum prepares its graduates for success in Ph.D. programs in English by increasing their knowledge of literary history and developing their skills in writing, literary analysis, and research; providing intensive training in writing and literary studies to help students excel as classroom teachers; preparing students for careers that demand advanced analytical and communication skills.

Program Outcomes:

PG 1: The English Department will graduate a minimum of 5 MA students each year to be a program in good standing.

Student Learning Outcomes:

SLO 1: Students will demonstrate a broad and integrated knowledge of literary history, theory, and pedagogy.

SLO 2: Students will be prepared for success in PhD programs in English.

SLO 3: Students will be prepared for success in other areas of advanced graduate education.

SLO 4: Students will be prepared for careers in high schools and community colleges.

SLO 5: Students will be prepared for careers outside academe that require advanced analytical and communication skills.

A departmentally developed curriculum map can be found in Appendix 1 that shows the connections between courses and student learning outcomes.

Assessment Methods:

PG 1: Graduate a minimum of 5 MA students each year.

- Graduation Rate:

Tracking the graduate rate will aid the Department in determining the effectiveness of course offerings and advisement. The threshold for an MA program in good standing is 5 graduates a year.

SLO 1: Demonstrate broad and integrated knowledge

- Comprehensive Exam:

Student shall respond in writing to two questions prepared by their advisory committee. One question is used for this outcome.

For students in the Creative Writing concentration, the question will ask the student to relate what they learned in writing the thesis or portfolio to literary movements or critical theories or writers not covered in the thesis or portfolio. If the thesis or portfolio deals with pedagogical issues, the student will discuss other theories not included in the research.

For Professional and Technical Communication students, the question will ask the student to discuss an ethical choice or dilemma encountered during the client project, including relevant theorists and/or theoretical frames.

For a student in the Literature concentration who write a thesis, the evaluation of this outcome will be based on the student's thesis. The department is in the process of developing a rubric for thesis evaluation. Students in the non-thesis Literature concentration will be evaluated on written questions based on the reading lists developed as part of their non-thesis curriculum.

- Survey of Alumni:

SLO 2: Prepared for success in PhD programs

- Comprehensive Exam:*

Student shall respond in writing to two questions prepared by their advisory committee. One question is used for this outcome.

For students in the Creative Writing concentration, the question will ask the student to discuss some of the teaching techniques they have used, or to discuss the ways they would present information from the thesis or portfolio in a seminar.

For Professional and Technical Communication students, the question will ask the student to discuss specific skills learned or developed while revising their digital artifacts for the portfolio, including ways those skills would transfer to future projects, clients, or professional situations.

For a student in the Literature concentration who write a thesis, the evaluation of this outcome will be based on the student's thesis. The department is in the process of developing a rubric for thesis evaluation. Students in the non-thesis Literature concentration will be evaluated on written questions based on the reading lists developed as part of their non-thesis curriculum.

*Beginning in 2019, students in the Literature concentration were not required to take the comprehensive exam.

Survey of Alumni

SLO 3: Prepared for success in other areas of advanced graduate education.

- Survey of Alumni

SLO 4: Prepared for careers in high schools and community colleges.

- Survey of Alumni

SLO 5: Prepared for careers outside academe

- Survey of Alumni

Results:

PG 1: Graduate a minimum of 5 MA students each year

M.A. Degrees Awarded by Academic Year

Academic Year	New students*	English M.A. degrees
2015-2016	5	3
2016-2017	3	4
2017-2018	5	4
2018-2019	5	4
2019-2020	13	5
2015-2020 total	31	20
2015-2020 annual average:	6	4

*Counts students in Fall plus any new entrants from prior Spring

SLO 1: Demonstrate a broad and integrated knowledge

Comprehensive Exam:

	# attempting	# passing
2017-18	4	4
2018-19	3	3
2019-20	3	3

SLO 2: Prepared for success in PhD programs

Comprehensive Exam:

	# attempting	# passing
2017-18	4	4
2018-19	3	3
2019-20	3	3*

*This is the first cohort where students in the literature concentration were not required to take the comprehensive exam.

The 2020 Alumni Survey indicates that of the 18 respondents, four pursued higher degrees, three PhD and one EdS.

Modifications for Improvement

SLOs 1-5

A new Alumni Survey and Exit Interview protocol will be initiated in Fall 2020.

SLOs 1-2

In February 2020, the Graduate Committee approved a revision to the Comprehensive Exam questions for students in the Professional and Technical Communication concentration. The previous questions were too focused on Literature and Pedagogy, which were holdovers from before the PTC concentration existed. The new questions are tailored to better consider issues in PTC fields, deriving specifically from the students' theses or portfolios.

Question one asks students to demonstrate their ability to connect theory from previous PTC coursework to praxis in the field, with a focus on the documents they have produced during their time in the program; specifically their portfolio, prospectus, client project report, internship research report, and critical reflection. Question two asks students to relate what they learned in the portfolio to industry, which should help them prepare to give their own "elevator pitch" for an interview or similar setting. These questions should also be useful preparation for the portfolio presentation/defense, which is constructed as a job interview.

Appendices

1. English MA Curriculum Map

Appendix 1: English MA Curriculum Map

Learning Outcomes	Required Courses		
	ENGL 6000 Introduction to Graduate Studies	ENGL 6--- American Literature	ENGL 6--- British Literature
Demonstrate a broad and integrated knowledge of literary history, theory, and pedagogy	I	R,A	R,A
Succeed in Ph.D. programs in English	I	R, A	R,A
Succeed in other areas of advanced graduate education	I	R,A	R,A
Be prepared for teaching careers in high school and community colleges	I	R,A	R,A
Be prepared for careers outside academe that require advanced analytical and communication skills	I	R, A	R,A