

Part I. General Information

Program(s) Discussed:	English Department
Current Semester:	Spring 2016
Date of Assessment Meeting(s):	Various discussions and meetings via email between September 2015 and May 2016
Participants in Assessment Meeting(s):	Tom Pace, Assessment Director, English Dept. John McBratney, English Department Chairperson Maria Soriano, Director of Writing Center

All Annual Assessment Reports are available to the appropriate Associate Dean, Dean, and the Provost, as well as to other administrators for institutional effectiveness and accreditation purposes. Please indicate the degree to which your program would like this information more widely shared.

On-Campus Users

- ☒ Freely available
☐ Available upon request
☐ Unavailable

Off-Campus Users

- ☒ Freely available
☐ Available upon request
☐ Unavailable

Part II. Assessment Process

Prompt: In one or two paragraphs, describe your assessment process. Did you gather data on all of your program's student learning goals? If not, which student learning goals did you measure in this assessment cycle? What tools did you use to attempt to measure student learning? Where and how were they administered? Who scored them?

The English department's assessment process has taken place along two lines: one, in 2014-15, the department began measuring student learning in the English major at an early stage in the major sequence. Two, in 2015-2016, the department measured student learning by assessing the English department's learning goal #1: "Read texts with active, critical skill to form and articulate accomplished interpretations."

During the 2014-2015 academic year, in an effort to measure student learning in the English major at an early stage in the major sequence, Drs. LaGuardia (L), Kvidera (K), and Stayer (S) met at the end of Fall 2014 to assess 15 literary critical essays from sections of EN 277, "Major American Writers," taught during that semester. Each of the faculty members picked 5 essays randomly from the essays they collected in their sections. Each essay was read by two of the three faculty members. The following learning goals (LG's) were assessed: 1) Read texts with active, critical skill to form and articulate accomplished interpretations of those texts. (for all 3 tracks in the major); 2) Produce *written analyses of literary texts* that demonstrate awareness of audience, organizational sophistication, and clear argumentation. (for the Literature track only); 3) Recognize the employment and contextual use of the formal elements of language and genre. (for the Lit and Professional Writing tracks; LG #4 for the Creative Writing track).

During the same academic year, Drs. Feerick (F) and McBratney (M) met at the end of the Spring 2015 to assess 10 literary essays from sections of EN 214, “Major British Authors,” taught during that semester. Each of the faculty members picked 5 essays randomly from the essays they collected in their sections. Each essay was read by both faculty members. The following learning goals (LG’s) were assessed: 1. Read texts with active, critical skill to form and articulate accomplished interpretations of those texts. (for all 3 tracks in the major); 2. Produce *written analyses of literary texts* that demonstrate awareness of audience, organizational sophistication, and clear argumentation. (for the Literature track only); 3. Recognize the employment and contextual use of the formal elements of language and genre. (for the Lit and Professional Writing tracks; LG #4 for the Creative Writing track).

For 2015-16, the assessment committee assessed data on the English department’s learning outcome #1: To do so, we assessed 4 literary essays from a 400-level English course. The papers were written by seniors on the literature track. The papers were anonymized by the university’s academic assessment office, and all three members of the assessment committee – Drs. Pace and McBratney and Maria Soriano – read each paper. We scored them using a rubric developed by Dr. Pace: 1. Reflects active, critical reading of texts under consideration; 2. Articulates accomplished interpretations.

Part III. Findings

Prompt: Along with this report, please submit the data charts the program used during the assessment meeting. Describe, in words, what your program learned about student learning during this assessment cycle. What were your strengths? In what ways did students fail to meet the goals you set for them?

For EN 277 during Fall 2014

Reading (LG #1 for all tracks): average = 3.5/5

Writing (LG #2 for Lit track): average = 3.2/5

Language (LG #3 for Lit & PW tracks, LG #4 for CW track): average = 2.9/5

The dimension of “Process” doesn’t align with any current EN major learning goal, so it wasn’t averaged.

For EN 214 during Spring 2015:

Reading (LG #1 for all tracks): average = 3.75/5

Writing (LG #2 for Lit track): average = 3.2/5

Language (LG #3 for Lit & PW tracks, LG #4 for CW track): average = 3.4/5

The dimension of “Process” doesn’t align with any current EN major learning goal, so it wasn’t averaged.

For 400-level course during Spring 2016

Reading: average = 2.6/3

Interpretations: average = 2.2/3

Name(s) of file(s) containing data charts: [list names here]

Part IV. Planned Changes to the Assessment System

Prompt: What changes, if any, do you need to make to your assessment system? (Questions to consider include: 1) Do your measures and processes provide useful data with a reasonable amount of effort? and 2) Are your measures reliable, valid, and sufficient?) On which student learning goals do you plan to focus your attention during the next assessment cycle? Do you need to implement additional formative assessment tools to better understand some of your findings? If so, describe those here.

One of the issues that came out of our discussions of the assessment process for 2015-16 is that the department may need to revisit the language used in Learning Goal #1. Specifically, we found it difficult to assess what it means to “read with active, critical skill,” since the result of that reading is often the writing students perform in their essays. We also found that as we read the essays, we addressed reading with “active, critical skill” to be a local matter of how students closely read and analyzed a passage of text. This local concern was split with the larger, global concern of the student writer’s argument that reflected the second criteria: “articulates accomplished interpretations.” As a committee, we may need to revisit the language of Learning Goal #1 so that it more accurately reflects the skills students perform.

We also determined that we may need to collect more papers from different 400-level courses to get a more accurate understanding of how English majors are able to accomplish Learning Goal #1.

Part V. Planned Changes to the Program in Response to Data

Prompt: What changes, if any, do you need to make to your program in response to what you now know about student learning? (Possibilities include changes to learning goals, pedagogy, assignments in particular classes, activities, and curricular requirements and/or structure.) What is your anticipated timeline for both implementation and assessment of the planned changes?

For EN 214 essays during 2014-15 academic year:

1. Continue the good work on cultivating good reading.
2. Spend more class time on global writing concerns and emphasizing to students the need to attend to these matters in their essays.
3. Spend more class time discussing formal elements of language & genre and emphasizing to students the need to include these features in Lit essays/PW work/CW projects.

If we’re going to focus on one thing for 2016-17, do #2.

For EN 277 essays during 2014-2015 academic year

1. Continue the good work on cultivating good reading.
2. Spend more class time on global writing concerns and emphasizing to students the need to attend to these matters in their essays.
3. Spend more class time discussing formal elements of language & genre and emphasizing to students the need to include these features in Lit essays/PW work/CW projects.

If we’re going to focus on one thing for 2016-17, do #3.

For 400-level essays during 2015-16 academic year

1. Continue the good work on cultivating good reading.
2. Spend more class time on global writing concerns, such as argument, and emphasizing to students the need to attend to these matters in their essays.