

University of North Carolina Wilmington

Educational Program Assessment Plan and Report

BA English

Assessment Plan for 2008 - 2009

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The BA in English offers two options: Literary Studies (which also includes a Teacher Licensure option) and Professional Writing. There is one set of Program Outcomes for the major. Each options has its own Student Learning Outcomes.

Program Outcome UNCW Strategic Goal	Tools	Implementation	Summary of Findings	Actions Taken
<p>PO 1: To review the requirements of the major and make changes if necessary to emphasize the breadth and depth of literary studies.</p> <p>UNCW-wide SGs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create the most powerful learning experience possible for our students • Embrace and enhance diversity • Create an educational environment that prepares our students to be global citizens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparative review of courses required at peer institutions and at UNCW • Review of syllabi (and/or evaluation of individual courses) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literary Studies Committee • We reviewed our own course requirements and compared them with those at our eighteen peer institutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of the Literary Studies programs in our peer institutions had more course requirements than we had. • Our major did not draw on the strengths of our professional writing colleagues. • Our major did not emphasize global diversity. 	<p>The English Department and the University Curriculum Committee unanimously approved an overhaul to the major, which will go into effect in Fall 2010. Salient differences between the old major and the new major include the new requirements of 6 hours in Anglo-American Literary History, 6 hours in Diverse Literary Cultures, 6 hours in Writing, all of which emphasize the diverse and changing nature of literary studies.</p>
<p>PO 2: To review our assessment procedure and, if necessary, to develop a new assessment plan that accurately evaluates the effectiveness of our program.</p> <p>UNCW-wide SGs: Create the most powerful</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study of our assessment procedure. • Comparative analysis of our assessment procedure and those of the Professional Writing track and the History Department. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literary Studies Committee • Departmental Chair • Professional Writing Coordinator • Director of Assessment • Past assessment reports, the assessment reports of the Professional Writing 	<p>Our assessment plan did not evaluate clear, coherent writing, a sophisticated understanding of texts, students' reflection on their academic experiences, or the diverse nature of literary studies.</p>	<p>The Literary Studies committee, under the guidance of the Director of Assessment, created a new procedure to evaluate our program. In addition to creating the procedure for a portfolio system, the committee created and the</p>

learning experience possible for our students.		track and the History Department		department approved an interim procedure to evaluate our program.
<p>PO 3: More formalized mentoring of undergraduate research projects and internships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased course credit for applied learning opportunities to allow for more writing and reflection • Student participation in professional conferences <p>UNCW-wide SG:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create the most powerful learning experience possible for our students • Strengthen the university's regional engagement and outreach activities 	Review of departmental annual report data	Departmental Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From fall 2008 through summer 2009, 43 students participated in the internship program. • Additionally, the department hosted graduate student conferences in the spring of 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The department changed the requirements of the Wentworth fellowships, one of the key applied learning opportunities available to students, to include a reflective essay summarizing what the student learned from his/her travel experiences and a public poster presentation; additionally, the Wentworth fellowships are now graded and worth 1 course credit hour, underscoring the academic side of this experience. • We are actively searching for increased opportunities for applied learning experiences within the community.
<p>PO 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to prepare students to engage constructively in a broad array of professional endeavors, including in education, legal, business, and not-for-profit organizations; and as editors, technical writers, public relations specialists, and journalists <p>UNCW-wide SG:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create the most powerful learning experience possible for our students 	Internship Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internship Coordinator • Departmental Chair 	From fall 2008 through summer 2009, 43 students out of 340 majors participated in the internship program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our current internship program is at capacity, and we are satisfied with its representation within the major. Were we to build the program further, we would need additional faculty resources, although we continue to actively search for more internships, additional travel money for students, and increased opportunities for applied learning experiences within the community.

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have recently begun a dialogue with Career Services, which will result in visits from representatives of Career Services to our gateway class, ENG 205, and our senior seminar, ENG 495, so that our students recognize what careers an English b.a. prepares them for.
<p>PO 5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to nurture within students the awareness, as lifelong learners, to engage constructively as conscientious participants in their immediate communities, in democratic practices at every level, and in all manner of social, cultural, and political debates by supporting the service projects of Sigma Tau Delta, Chapter One (our English clubs), and other English Department-sponsored activities <p>UNCW-wide SG:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create the most powerful learning experience possible for our students Strengthen the university's regional engagement and outreach activities 	<p>Review of the service learning activities engaged in by our students and faculty</p>	<p>Departmental Chair</p>	<p>Our students participated in a variety of service learning programs, including the Synergy Common Reading experience, book sales, tutoring at local high schools and elementary schools.</p>	<p>We will more actively participate within the community and keep a track record of those activities.</p>

Student Learning Outcomes – Literary Studies Option

Student Learning Outcome UNCW-wide Learning Goal	Tools	Implementation	Summary of Findings	Actions Taken
<p>SLO 1: Students will be able to write a focused thesis.</p> <p>UNCW-wide SLO: Thoughtful Expression</p>	<p>Analysis of a sample of capstone argumentative, research-based papers from ENG 495 on a 4-point scale (from 1 [least-effective] to 4 [most-effective]).</p>	<p>The Literary Studies Committee of the English Department assessed 12 capstone papers drawn at random from 2 sections of ENG 495 taught by 2 different faculty during the previous semester.</p>	<p>See results table. 72% of the papers sampled had developed, strong theses; 22% were highly sophisticated. The committee was pleased with the students' abilities to write coherent, focused, and sometimes highly sophisticated theses.</p>	<p>To continue to emphasize clear, argumentative writing, the Literary Studies Committee recommended and the English Department and University College Committee approved the requirement of an additional 3 hours in writing courses.</p>
<p>ENG SLO2: Students demonstrate an understanding of how criticism promotes insights to literary analysis.</p> <p>UNCW-wide SLO: Critical Thinking</p>	<p>Analysis of a sample of argumentative, research-based papers from ENG 495 on a 4-point scale (from 1 [least-effective] to 4 [most-effective]).</p>	<p>The Literary Studies Committee of the English Department assessed 12 capstone papers drawn at random from 2 sections of ENG 495 taught by 2 different faculty during the previous semester.</p>	<p>See results table. There was a wide disparity in students' abilities to use literary criticism to further their own arguments, though 86% of the papers employed secondary sources well in their arguments, 14% did not. We attribute this disparity to the lack of consistency in our majors' progress to degree; ideally the new requirements will offer students a more consistent academic experience.</p>	<p>We began a department-wide discussion on the goals, construction, and assignments of our gateway course, ENG 205. We are in the process of posting those suggestions on our website and are encouraging faculty to emphasize these skills in both lower- and upper-division courses.</p>

Student Learning Outcome UNCW-wide Learning Goal	Tools	Implementation	Summary of Findings	Actions Taken
<p>ENG SLO 3: Students integrate research well into argumentative papers.</p> <p>UNCW-wide SLOs: Information Literacy Thoughtful Expression</p>	<p>Analysis of a sample of argumentative, research-based papers from ENG 495 on a 4-point scale (from 1 [least-effective] to 4 [most-effective]).</p>	<p>The Literary Studies Committee of the English Department assessed 12 capstone papers drawn at random from 2 sections of ENG 495 taught by 2 different faculty during the previous semester.</p>	<p>See results table. 75% of the papers assessed smoothly incorporated primary and secondary research into their argument; nevertheless 25% of the papers indicated confusion about how to quote sources and attribute them correctly. The committee thought these results indicated that faculty should devote more time to showing students how to incorporate research into their essays, and that students needed to practice this skill more consistently throughout their undergraduate careers.</p>	<p>Our new requirements include an additional 3 hours in writing courses. We recommend that faculty in both lower- and upper-division courses devote more class time to teaching how to integrate sources into written work.</p>
<p>ENG SLO 4: Students follow MLA practices for quoting correctly.</p> <p>UNCW-wide SLO: Information Literacy</p>	<p>Analysis of a sample of argumentative, research-based papers from ENG 495 on a 4-point scale (from 1 [least-effective] to 4 [most-effective]).</p>	<p>The Literary Studies Committee of the English Department assessed 12 capstone papers drawn at random from 2 sections of ENG 495 taught by 2 different faculty during the previous semester.</p>	<p>See results table. None of the papers followed perfect MLA style.</p>	<p>We recommend that faculty devote more class time to teaching correct MLA bibliography style in our classes. When we undertake the next round of assessment, we'll see if our students fare better in this area.</p>

Student Learning Outcomes – Professional Writing Option

Student Learning Outcome UNCW-wide Learning Goal	Tools	Implementation	Summary of Findings	Actions Taken
<p>Outcome 1: Students will be able to adapt information to the needs of specific audiences.</p> <p>UNCW Learning Goal: Thoughtful Expression Diversity</p>	<p>Each student creates an Electronic Portfolio.</p>	<p>The Professional Writing Committee assesses one-third of the electronic portfolios produced in our capstone course, ENG 496: Senior Seminar in Writing and Rhetoric. Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 5 are assessed in even-numbered years while 3, 4, and 5 are assessed in odd-numbered years. Results discussed here come from a comparative review of the data from Fall 2008 – Spring 2009.</p>	<p>This learning outcome was not measured during the 2008-09 academic year.</p>	
<p>Outcome 2: Students will be able to find, evaluate, and appropriately cite information sources.</p> <p>UNCW Learning Goal: Information Literacy</p>	<p>Each student creates an Electronic Portfolio.</p>	<p>The Professional Writing Committee assesses one-third of the electronic portfolios produced in our capstone course, ENG 496: Senior Seminar in Writing and Rhetoric. Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 5 are assessed in even-numbered years while 3, 4, and 5 are assessed in odd-numbered years. Results discussed here come from a comparative review of the data from Fall 2008 – Spring 2009.</p>	<p>This learning outcome was not measured during the 2008-09 academic year.</p>	
<p>Outcome 3: Students will be able to construct and present</p>	<p>Each student creates an</p>	<p>The Professional Writing Committee assesses one-</p>	<p>Measures of this learning outcome found unanimous</p>	<p>We expect further strengthening of this outcome in the future, as</p>

<p>evidence to support a clear and logical argument.</p> <p>UNCW Learning Goal:</p> <p>Inquiry</p> <p>Critical Thinking</p>	<p>Electronic Portfolio.</p>	<p>third of the electronic portfolios produced in our capstone course, ENG 496: Senior Seminar in Writing and Rhetoric. Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 5 are assessed in even-numbered years while 3, 4, and 5 are assessed in odd-numbered years. Results discussed here come from a comparative review of the data from Fall 2008 – Spring 2009.</p>	<p>agreement that all portfolios except one evidenced this trait. Among the remaining portfolios, measurements show strong patterns of achievement in this student learning outcome.</p>	<p>we have instituted significant changes in our requirements and offerings that will enable students to have even more exposure to and practice with this outcome. New courses in advanced composition and a strengthened requirement in rhetorical theory, among other changes, should contribute to stronger student learning outcomes in future years. These changes are in effect as on Fall 2009 for new majors.</p>
<p>Outcome 4: Students will be able to create usable texts in a variety of genres and forms employing multiple media.</p> <p>UNCW Learning Goal:</p> <p>Thoughtful Expression</p>	<p>Each student creates an Electronic Portfolio.</p>	<p>The Professional Writing Committee assesses one-third of the electronic portfolios produced in our capstone course, ENG 496: Senior Seminar in Writing and Rhetoric. Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 5 are assessed in even-numbered years while 3, 4, and 5 are assessed in odd-numbered years. Results discussed here come from a comparative review of the data from Fall 2008 – Spring 2009.</p>	<p>As in the past, measures for this outcome found strong but somewhat mixed results, as some portfolios clearly evidenced student struggles with technologies.</p>	<p>In response, we greatly strengthened the requirements for technology-based writing courses in our overhaul of the Professional Writing curriculum, which took effect in Fall 2009 for new majors. All students in the Professional Writing Option of the English major will now be required to take one of two technology-based courses, ENG 314: Writing and Technology or ENG 319: Document Design.</p>
<p>Outcome 5: Students will be able to describe and assess their own development as producers and consumers of texts.</p>	<p>Each student creates an Electronic Portfolio.</p>	<p>The Professional Writing Committee assesses one-third of the electronic portfolios produced in our capstone course, ENG 496: Senior Seminar in Writing and</p>	<p>All but one portfolio evidenced at least satisfactory achievement of this learning outcome. Our recently-altered assignment prompt for the portfolio,</p>	<p>Reflective assignments now being used in the gateway course should bring further improvements in coming years, as those students progress through the program.</p>

<p>UNCW Learning Goal: Global Citizenship</p>		<p>Rhetoric. Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 5 are assessed in even-numbered years while 3, 4, and 5 are assessed in odd-numbered years. Results discussed here come from a comparative review of the data from Fall 2008 – Spring 2009.</p>	<p>along with the emphasis given to every instructor regarding the importance of reflection in the learning process, seem to be starting to make an impact.</p>	
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Literary Studies Results

Percentage of papers that met each score for each goal.

	1	2	3	4
Goal 1	6%	22%	50%	22%
Goal 2	6%	8%	69%	17%
Goal3	6%	19%	69%	6%
Goal4	8%	42%	50%	0%

Level 3 and above meet expectations.

Requirements for the Electronic Portfolio

English 496: Senior Seminar in Writing and Rhetoric

As you approach the end of your undergraduate career at UNCW, we ask that you prepare an electronic portfolio that collects and reflects upon your work in the Professional Writing Program. To do this, you will gather significant projects and essays that you have completed during your time at UNCW and in the English Department, write an introduction to the portfolio, write a reflective statement, and upload all of the documents to your webspace with a clear and user-friendly navigational structure. Piece of cake!

The online portfolio becomes a useful tool for your job search process, as potential employers will be interested in and impressed by your polished presentation of your work. The portfolios are also intended to help the Professional Writing Program assess and improve student learning. We want to know what our students are learning, whether our teaching methods are helpful, and what else we should be teaching or offering.

What goes into the Electronic Portfolio?

- **5 projects or assignments:** Choose assignments from this class or other courses you have taken. The best portfolios will feature a mix of projects and written work to showcase both your writing and your technology skills. Include projects that highlight your ability to do research, cite sources appropriately and accurately, and that illustrate your competence with technologies. All written projects included should be in pdf format.
- **An introduction:** Explain the contents of your portfolio. What are the pieces you included and why are they significant? You may include a table of contents or a hyperlink with this introduction.
- **A reflective statement:** What have you learned about writing? About technology? About critical thinking? What are your future expectations? What other information or courses would you like to have had and what else do you think the Professional Writing Program and English Department can do to help students in the major or track?
- **Creativity and a navigational structure:** Be as creative as you wish. Feel free to take some risks, keeping in mind that your instructor will not be the only one viewing the materials. Consider the best ways to present your work and the most elegant navigational structure.