

English BA

Literature And Literary Theory (4000-Level)

Goal Description:

Students majoring in English will gain an appreciation of specific critical approaches and methodologies in studying literature and literary theory.

Providing Department: English BA

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Reading Literature Critically And Writing About It Analytically

Learning Objective Description:

Students will be able to use various approaches and methodologies to analyze literary texts and demonstrate the ability to interpret texts by communicating their understanding of those texts in analytic essays. Students will have an opportunity to write analytical and critical discussions of literature.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Assessment Of Writing

Indicator Description:

Reading and writing are part and parcel of each other. Essays written to analyze and/or apply literary texts suggest the depth and quality of the students' reading, as well as their understanding of the assignment. Thus, during the spring 2016 semester, we will collect writing samples of English majors from 4000-level (senior-level) classes and examine them to ascertain the effectiveness of reading that they evince. Our goal is to read 25% of the essays, chosen at random, written by English majors in 4000-level literature courses. We anticipate an enrollment of some 105 students in any given long semester and so should expect to read 26 to 30 essays.

Criterion Description:

80% of English seniors in 4000-level writing-enhanced classes will meet the departmental criteria for academic writing that reflects critical thinking and good editing.

To assess the effectiveness of student writing abilities, English faculty will conduct an annual holistic review of representative essays produced across all sections of 4000-level (senior) classes.

Holistic Scoring Procedures

1. To assure that the assessment reviews a representative sampling of writing, teachers of 4000-level sections in Spring 2015 were asked to submit a final paper significant writing from 3-4 students in each section, with these students selected at random by the department's secretarial staff. Submitted papers represent some 25% of students enrolled. (See attached memo to 4000-level instructors.)
2. Two primary readers from among the tenured/tenure-track English faculty independently read and score each essay under review; in the case of an unreliable result, the essay is referred to a secondary (i.e., a third) reader, who reads the essay independently, without any knowledge of the previous results (see number 5, below).
3. Each primary reader scores each essay on a 4-point scale, with a score of 4 the highest possible. The two primary scores are added to yield a total, with the final scores ranging from 8 (highest possible) to 2 (lowest possible). A combined score of 5 or higher is passing. A score of 7 or

8 indicates an excellent essay; a score of 5 or 6 indicates an acceptable essay; a score of 4 or less indicates an unacceptable essay.

4. Reliability of the two scores is assumed when both scores from the primary readers are congruent, that is, when they are within 1 point of each other. For example, a score of 6 that would be seen as reliable would mean that both readers marked the essay as a 3. A reliable score of 5 would mean that one reader assessed the essay as a 3 while the other reader assessed it as a 2.

5. Should the primary scores for an essay not be reliable—for example, a 4 and a 1, a 3 and a 1, a 4 and a 2—the essay is referred to a secondary reader. If that reader agrees with the higher score, the essay is certified as acceptable or excellent; if the secondary reader agrees with the lower score, the essay is certified as unacceptable.

Findings Description:

We did not receive enough writing artifacts for assessment.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Assessment of Writing

Action Description:

We will no longer use the previous 4000 level courses as our method of assessment. Our new capstone will be the primary source of writing assessment.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Senior Capstone

Action Description:

Faculty will continue to discuss and then establish a capstone experience that requires all majors to submit a portfolio that will include artifacts to assess writing, critical thinking, and career projection.

World And Multicultural Literature (2000-Level)

Goal Description:

Students will be exposed to the works of representative writers of various cultures and to universal themes and common concerns of literature. Students will have an opportunity to facilitate the social, political, and religious tenets reflected in the primary works read.

Providing Department: English BA

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Demonstrating Knowledge In World And Multicultural Literature

Learning Objective Description:

Students will read and articulate their understanding of basic concepts and approaches to world and multicultural literature.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Assessing 2000-level Writing

Indicator Description:

Reading and writing are part and parcel of each other. Essays written to analyze and/or apply literary texts suggest the depth and quality of the students' reading, as well as their understanding of the assignment. Thus, during the spring 2021 semester, we will collect writing samples of students

enrolled in 2000-level (sophomore-level) classes and examine them to ascertain the effectiveness of reading that they evince. We anticipate collecting samples at random from approximately 15% of the students enrolled in ENGL 2332 and ENGL 2333.

Criterion Description:

50% of sophomore students in ENGL 2332 and ENGL 2333 will meet the departmental criteria for academic writing that reflects critical thinking and good editing.

To assess the effectiveness of student writing abilities, English faculty will conduct an annual holistic review of representative essays produced across all sections of ENGL 2332 (World Literature I: Before the Seventeenth Century) and ENGL 2333 (World Literature II: The Seventeenth-Century and After).

NOTE: These course numbers represent a renumbering to conform with Core requirements. Formerly, ENGL 2332 was ENGL 2331 and ENGL 2332 was ENGL 2342. We have combined our reading of student papers from these two courses because either will serve to meet Core requirements, and 2332 is not prerequisite for 2333.

Holistic Scoring Procedures

1. To assure that the assessment reviews a representative sampling of writing, teachers of ENGL 2332 and 2333 sections in Spring 2015 were asked to submit a final paper significant writing from 3-4 students in each section, with these students selected at random by the department's secretarial staff. Submitted papers represent some 15% of students enrolled. (See attached memo to ENGL 2332 and 2333 instructors.)
2. Two primary readers from among the English faculty at all levels (tenure/tenure-track, lecturer, and Graduate Assistants) independently read and score each essay under review; in the case of an unreliable result, the essay is referred to a secondary (i.e., a third) reader, who reads the essay independently, without any knowledge of the previous results (see number 5, below).
3. Each primary reader scores each essay on a 4-point scale, with a score of 4 the highest possible. The two primary scores are added to yield a total, with the final scores ranging from 8 (highest possible) to 2 (lowest possible). A combined score of 5 or higher is passing. A score of 7 or 8 indicates an excellent essay; a score of 5 or 6 indicates an acceptable essay; a score of 4 or less indicates an unacceptable essay.
4. Reliability of the two scores is assumed when both scores from the primary readers are congruent, that is, when they are within 1 point of each other. For example, a score of 6 that would be seen as reliable would mean that both readers marked the essay as a 3. A reliable score of 5 would mean that one reader assessed the essay as a 3 while the other reader assessed it as a 2.
5. Should the primary scores for an essay not be reliable—for example, a 4 and a 1, a 3 and a 1, a 4 and a 2—the essay is referred to a secondary reader. If that reader agrees with the higher score, the essay is certified as acceptable or excellent; if the secondary reader agrees with the lower score, the essay is certified as unacceptable.

Findings Description:

We did not receive enough artifacts to assess.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Assessing 2000-level Writing

Action Description:

The department will do away with 2000 level courses as a source of assessment data (as we develop and implement a capstone).

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Senior Capstone

Action Description:

Faculty will continue to discuss and then establish a capstone experience that requires all majors to submit a portfolio that will include artifacts to assess writing, critical thinking, and career projection.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):

Closing Summary

As we were not able to completely address our PCI items, we would like to continue working on these (particularly since COVID remains a reality (and challenge) for recruiting.

- 1) Create better and more realistic assessment tools and processes. Consider adopting a upper level Capstone project for majors and eliminating assessment in lower-level surveys intended primarily for non-majors.
- 2) Continue emphasizing and supporting and faculty and student research
- 3) Develop recruiting strategies and events that can be virtual, considering the current and unpredictable Covid virus implications for traditional events
- 4) Process and add new contemporary courses to build student interest and to help recruiting for the major.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

- 1) We are continuing to work on developing a new method of collecting writing artifacts
- 2) The department has allocated money for research related activities
- 3) Recruiting Strategies remain on the agenda for the upcoming year; during the assessment period we have focused on better web presence and signage that promotes student interest
- 4) We increased offerings for courses that may seem more relevant to students

Plan for Continuous Improvement Item

Closing Summary:

- 1) Continue to improve and update curricula.
- 2) Department will work together to create and implement capstone program
- 3) Department will make sure 4000 level course expectations (and writing assignments) are significantly more intensive than those in 3000 level courses.