

**Assessment Report 2007-2008**  
**English Department**  
**Southern Utah University**

**English Department Mission Statement:** The English Department provides a strong and diverse liberal education in literature and writing for majors, minors, and general education students.

**English Department Goal Statement:** The English Department provides courses, instruction, advising, mentoring, and experiential opportunities for students in an atmosphere that encourages and supports learning, free inquiry, critical thinking, creativity, and clear and honest communication.

**Five-step assessment plan:**

<b>Expanded Statement of Institutional Purpose</b>	<b>Program Intended Education Outcomes</b>	<b>Means of Program Assessment and Criteria for Success</b>	<b>Summary of Data Collected</b>	<b>Use of Results</b>
<p>1. The English Dept. provides courses and instruction in literature and writing for majors, minors, and general education students; these courses encourage and support learning, free inquiry, critical thinking, creativity, and clear and honest communication.</p>	<p>1.a. <b>Composition</b> (General Education)            1) Students will be able to adapt their writing for different purposes, audiences, and composing situations.            2) Students will be able to write for different disciplines.            3) Students will demonstrate critical and analytical thinking in their writing.            4) Students will be able to use the syntax and the mechanics of edited American English appropriately.</p> <p>1.b. <b>Literature</b>            1) Students will demonstrate knowledge of primary texts, both canonical and non-canonical.            2) Students will demonstrate</p>	<p>1.a. <b>Composition</b>            Every three years, all entering ENGL 1010 students write a benchmark essay to determine their written communication and critical thinking skills; these benchmark essays are paired with capstone essays written by exiting ENGL 2010 students, and all composition instructors participate in evaluating the essays to determine the degree of improvement exhibited by composition students. We will conduct this review next in AY 2008-2009.</p> <p>1.b. <b>Literature</b>            Every three years, graduates in English with a Literature emphasis take ETS's MFAT (Major Field Achievement Test) in Literature in</p>	<p>1.a. <b>Composition</b>            This program was last assessed in 2005-2006.</p> <p>1.b. <b>Literature</b>            The MFAT was last administered in Spring 2006. Capstone essays written by Literature majors were last assessed in Spring 2007.</p>	<p>1.a. <b>Composition</b>            Not applicable this year.</p> <p>1.b. <b>Literature</b>            Not applicable this year.</p>

	<p>knowledge of literary history, genres, and periods.</p> <p>3) Students will be able to apply current critical thinking to primary texts.</p> <p>4) Students will demonstrate an ability to write and speak about English critically.</p> <p>5) Students will be prepared for entrance into graduate school or other professions where their unique skills are required.</p> <p>6) Students will have the opportunity to present papers and to submit papers for publication.</p> <p>7) Students will have the opportunity for collegiality among their peers and faculty.</p> <p><b>1.c. Teaching (Secondary Education)</b>  1) Through a sequential series of courses, students will develop a knowledge base in the fundamentals of language and literature, both in primary works and in critical and theoretical approaches to these works.  2) Students will demonstrate knowledge and theory relevant to teaching language arts at the</p>	<p>English to determine how they compare with graduating seniors at other institutions. The MFAT tests students' knowledge of major works in all periods of British and American literature as well as works translated into English; genres covered include poetry, drama, biography, essay, short story, novel, and literary theory. The MFAT also tests students' analytical skills. We expect SUU students to average at or above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile; no SUU student should score below the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile. We will administer this test next in Spring 2009.</p> <p>In addition, every three years, a random sample of capstone essays of graduating seniors are evaluated by 4000-level literature instructors and an outside reader to determine students' ability to interpret, analyze, and synthesize material in a major scholarly essay. We expect all students to demonstrate knowledge and skills at a level with comparable with other national public institutions of SUU's size. We will conduct this assessment next in Spring 2010.</p> <p><b>1.c. Teaching</b>  Every year, Teaching majors in English must take ETS's PRAXIS content area exam, administered by the SUU School of Education, to attain licensure. We expect all of our secondary education majors to pass the PRAXIS exam.</p> <p>Each Teaching major is also videotaped presenting a class lesson,</p>	<p><b>1.c. Teaching</b>  In 2007-2008, English students' PRAXIS scores averaged 173 out of a possible 200; the passing score is 168. The average of 173 is the lowest score in the past five years. Furthermore, students have a pass rate of only 59%, which is also the lowest in five years.</p>	<p><b>1.c. Teaching</b>  We will strive to emphasize to students the importance of studying for the PRAXIS exam as well as learning the necessary material and preparing to teach in a live classroom setting. Without "teaching to the test," the ENGL 4900 instructor must be aware of PRAXIS exam content.</p>
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	<p>secondary level. The program helps the student understand that practice must be related to theory, and that methods do not exist in a vacuum, but must be tied to the most recent research in the field.</p> <p>3) Students will be able to create teaching units, find information about texts, form critical ideas about texts, and evaluate research.</p> <p>4) Students will be prepared to teach English at the secondary level.</p> <p><b>1.d. Creative Writing</b></p> <p>1) Students will gain experience writing original work in several major categories: poetry, nonfiction, fiction, and playwriting.</p> <p>2) Students will produce polished work to submit for publication in at least one genre.</p> <p>3) Students will understand the process of submitting work for publication.</p> <p>4) Students will be conversant with the literary traditions out of which their own work grows through the study of primary texts in their literature courses.</p> <p>5) Students will have the opportunity to gain experience in editing and publishing an on-campus literary journal.</p> <p>6) Students will be prepared for entrance into graduate school; for positions in publishing, writing, or editing; and for other areas where their unique skills are required.</p> <p>7) Students will have the opportunity to take part in a community of writers, through events with invited writers, open readings, classes, and work on the literary journal.</p>	<p>and the instructor reviews that video with the student. All student teachers must also submit a teacher work sample during their student teaching semester, and all student teachers must submit a teaching portfolio.</p> <p><b>1.d. Creative Writing</b></p> <p>Every three years, a random sample of capstone portfolios of graduating seniors are evaluated by outside readers to assess students' creative writing abilities. We expect the majority of students to demonstrate skills that could lead to publication or acceptance into graduate school. We will conduct this assessment next in Spring 2011.</p> <p>All graduating Creative Writing majors also turn in a portfolio of work that is assessed by a member of the Creative Writing faculty. The portfolio begins with a critical statement concerning the student's own aesthetic project and its relationship to literary tradition. Following that is a collection of twenty-five pages of poetry, or fifty pages of prose or drama, or a combination of the two.</p> <p>*All graduating seniors, irrespective of program emphasis, are asked to complete an online exit survey to indicate their level of satisfaction with the English program.</p>	<p><b>1.d. Creative Writing</b></p> <p>Capstone portfolios were submitted by students in Spring 2008; assessment should be completed by mid-September 2008.</p> <p>*The online exit survey was completed by only 27% of graduating English majors, the lowest percentage by far since the department began the exit survey in</p>	<p><b>1.d. Creative Writing</b></p> <p>To be advised.</p> <p>*We need to stress the value of the exit surveys and send students more reminders so that more students participate in the online survey. We also need to be more aware of</p>
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			2004. While the majority of students indicated satisfaction with the education they received in the English Dept., one student was deeply dissatisfied. Overall, the level of graduating student satisfaction was lower in 2008 than in previous years.	serving students' needs in their final, often very stressful year preceding graduation.
2. The English Dept. provides effective advising for students.	2. Students will be able to graduate in a timely manner so that they can attain jobs in their chosen field of work or move on to graduate school.	2. Most students should complete their degree requirements with no more than 130 total credit hours. The English Dept. provides a 5-year course rotation schedule so that students can map out their program of study. The College of Humanities and Social Sciences Advisor, Kelly Lid Stephens, works in concert with the English Dept. Chair to advise students and monitor their progress.	2. English graduates in 2008 averaged 151 total credit hours, with 14 of the 19 graduates exceeding 130, and 8 graduates exceeding 160 hours. The highest total credit hours accumulated by an English major graduating in May 2008 was 182 (she was a double major), and the fewest total credit hours was 125.	2. The English Dept. will submit a proposal to create a composite major in Creative Writing-Teaching so that students who want to take a variety of English courses can apply those credits toward a composite degree. We will work closely with Kelly Lid Stephens and with students to create schedules that will allow students to graduate with fewer than 130 credits.
3. The English Dept. provides mentoring opportunities for students.	3. Students will have the opportunity to work alongside instructors to observe the practical aspects of teaching, research, and writing.	3. Students can be mentored as Instructor Assistants, Research Assistants, and Editors, and they can work in collaboration with instructors on scholarly and creative projects. Individual instructors monitor the experiences of students participating in these activities and report to the Dept. Chair.	3. Instructors who utilized the services of student assistants expressed satisfaction with their mentoring experience.	3. The Department will create an evaluative survey to be completed by student assistants so that we can assess their experience qualitatively.
4. The English Dept. provides experiential opportunities for students.	4.a. Students will be able to enhance their coursework by learning in a variety of experiential circumstances on campus.	4.a. All students who express an interest and demonstrate the aptitude should be able to serve as an Instructor Assistant, Research Assistant, Writing Center Tutor, ENGL 1000 Workshop Tutor, Literary Magazine Editor, or Departmental Office Assistant. Several tenure-track English instructors are assigned to monitor the experiences of students participating in these activities and report to the Dept. Chair.	4.a. Instructors who utilized the services of student assistants expressed satisfaction with their mentoring experience. Anecdotal information from students who worked as assistants and editors indicates that they were pleased with their experience. The Writing Center's data indicates that 1822 students visited the center in AY 2007-08, up from the previous year, and of the client satisfaction surveys requested following each tutoring session, only two fell below a score of 9 on a 10-point scale. The Writing	4.a. The Department will create an evaluative survey to be completed by student assistants so that we can assess their experience qualitatively. The experiences of tutors who work in the Writing Center and in ENGL 1000 workshops will continue to be assessed as they have been.

	<p>4.b. Students who are accepted into Sigma Tau Delta, the international English undergraduate honor society, will be encouraged to submit work to be presented at Sigma Tau Delta's annual conference.</p> <p>4.c. Students will be encouraged to study abroad at some point in their academic career.</p>	<p>4.b. At least 50% of students in SUU's chapter of Sigma Tau Delta will submit work to be presented at the annual conference.</p> <p>4.c. At least 5 English students each year will study abroad, either with the London Summer Study Abroad (two-week) Program or on a semester- or year-long program abroad.</p>	<p>Center requires that tutors achieve national College Reading and Learning Association certification as a condition of second year re-employment.</p> <p>4.b. Of the SUU students belonging to Sigma Tau Delta, 8 submitted work to the annual conference, and all 8 had their work accepted.</p> <p>4.c. The 2007 London Summer Study Abroad Program included 8 English majors or minors; the 2008 program was comprised of 5 English majors or minors.</p>	<p>4.b. SUU's chapter of Sigma Tau Delta has been hailed as one of the most active in the nation. We will continue to stress the benefits of the organization and encourage our majors and minors to join and to present papers at the annual conference.</p> <p>4.c. Participation in the 2008 London Summer Study Abroad Program was lower than the previous year, partly because of the increased cost and partly because of the increase in summer study abroad programs at SUU in 2008. We will be working to establish scholarships to help offset the cost of this program.</p>
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