

Assessment Report 2008-2009
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:

Expanded Statement of Institutional Purpose	Program Intended Education Outcomes	Means of Program Assessment and Criteria for Success	Summary of Data Collected	Use of Results
<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. Composition (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. Literature 1) Students will demonstrate knowledge of primary texts, both canonical and non-canonical. 2) Students will demonstrate</p>	<p>1.a. Composition 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 during AY 2009-2010.</p> <p>1.b. Literature 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. Composition This program's assessment results will be reported next in September 2010.</p> <p>1.b. Literature The MFAT was administered in Spring 2009, and, despite multiple appeals, only 3 of the 19 students graduating that semester (16%) took</p>	<p>1.a. Composition Use of results of this program's assessment will be determined in September 2010.</p> <p>1.b. Literature While we are pleased with the MFAT score results, we will need to discuss ways to give graduating majors some incentive to take the exam.</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>1.c. Teaching (Secondary Education)</p> <p>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.</p> <p>2) Students will demonstrate knowledge and theory relevant to</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 50th percentile; no SUU student should score below the 30th percentile. We will conduct our review over the summer following the Spring 2009 exam.</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 following AY 2009-2010.</p> <p>1.c. Teaching</p> <p>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>All English student teachers must</p>	<p>the test. Two students scored just above the 50th percentile, and one at the 85th percentile, for an average at the 65th percentile.</p> <p>Capstone essays written by Literature majors were last assessed in Spring 2007, and assessment results will be reported next in September 2011.</p> <p>1.c. Teaching</p> <p>Of the 13 English students who took the PRAXIS exam, only 7 passed on the first attempt. Two students who failed took the test a second time and passed, which makes the overall success rate 69%. (This score is down from last year's 72%.)</p> <p>The Director of Composition reports</p>	<p>Use of results of capstone essay assessment will be determined in September 2010.</p> <p>1.c. Teaching</p> <p>After consulting with Jerry Bowler about our students' PRAXIS scores, we determined to stress to students the importance of the exam and to direct them to take the practice test. (We also note that we are unable to identify 3 of the students who failed the exam, which indicates that some who take the test via SUU are not</p>
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	<p>teaching language arts at the 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>1.d. Creative Writing</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</p>	<p>submit a teacher work sample and teaching portfolio during their student teaching semester, and the Director of Composition observes and assesses their teaching in the classroom.</p> <p>1.d. Creative Writing</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 following AY 2010-2011.</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</p>	<p>that all English student teachers in 2008-2009 demonstrated competency in course planning and delivery. Of the 6 graduating student teachers who responded to the 2009 online exit survey, 4 indicated overall satisfaction with the supervisor's feedback.</p> <p>1.d. Creative Writing</p> <p>Capstone portfolios were submitted by students in AY 2007-08, and in 2008-09, outside readers reviewed a random selection of projects from students in Advanced Fiction Writing, Creative Nonfiction Writing, and Play Writing. Overall, the projects were deemed typical of undergraduate work, with 3 of the 16 projects labeled "very strong" or publishable. In general, the Creative Writing Committee agreed with the outside readers' assessments.</p> <p>*79% of graduating English majors completed the 2009 online exit survey. On the most global of the criteria ("richness and depth of</p>	<p>SUU students, and the percentage of our students who pass is therefore higher than 72%.)</p> <p>The Director of Composition will continue to monitor, assess, and advise all English student teachers.</p> <p>1.d. Creative Writing</p> <p>Following its review of outside reader assessments, the Creative Writing Committee has formulated a 5-point agenda to assess student success:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a consistent rubric for all creative writing genres. 2. Discuss variances in course assessment. 3. Discuss capstone course expectations. 4. Discuss institution of a capstone project to monitor internal assessment more effectively. 5. Submit to outside readers a selection of strong and weak writing samples rather than a random sample. <p>*We will continue our review of course offerings, stress to faculty the importance of communicating the practical application of course</p>
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	work on the literary journal.	with the English program.	instruction”), the average score was 3.80 on a 4-point scale. Scores were also high in “supports learning, free inquiry, critical thinking, creativity, and clear English” (3.85) and in “experiential opportunities” (3.77). Scores were lowest in “balance of courses” (3.5), “advising” (3.60), and “mentoring” (3.63). Overall, students appear to be pleased with faculty, but they would like a more practical curriculum and better advising.	content and skills, and meet with our academic advisor to discuss ways to improve our advising of majors.
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 English Dept. Advisor, Kelly Stephens, works in concert with the English Dept. Chair to advise students and monitor their progress.	2. English majors graduating in AY 2008-2009 averaged 154 credit hours. The 13 graduates in the Creative Writing and Literature emphases averaged 147 CH; the 12 graduates in the Secondary Ed emphasis averaged 162 CH. Only one student graduated with fewer than 130 CH, and 11 of the 23 graduated with 140 or fewer CH. These numbers are higher than in the previous year.	2. The English Dept. has submitted a proposal to create a new emphasis in Secondary Teaching/Creative Writing, and that emphasis will serve to encourage and reward those students who wish to broaden their knowledge and skills without increasing credit hours. That proposal has been approved by the Board of the Trustees. The English Dept. Chair will continue to work closely with majors and with the academic advisor to ensure timely graduation. We have prepared a 4-year schedule for students in each of the three emphases to follow so that they can complete their degrees in a timely and efficient manner.
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. In addition to the mentoring opportunities afforded instructor assistants, the English Dept. now offers three regular internships: Writing Center Tutor certification; Kolob Canyon Review (production of a literary journal); and Literary Arts Administration (planning and implementation of literary readings, conferences, and seminars).	3. All three internship programs were popular in AY 2008-2009 and will be continued.
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	4.a. All students who express an interest and demonstrate the aptitude should be able to serve as an	4.a. Of the 22 instructors who utilized and evaluated the services of student assistants in AY 2007-2008, 19 would	4.a. The Department will continue to evaluate student assistants as it has been. The experiences of tutors who

	<p>on campus.</p> <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>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.</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>definitely recommend their student-worker for rehire. Anecdotal information from students who worked as assistants and editors indicates that they were pleased with their experience. The Writing Center requires that tutors achieve national College Reading and Learning Association certification as a condition of second year re-employment. Several Writing Center tutors also presented a panel at the Rocky Mountain Peer Tutoring Conference in April 2009. The Writing Center's data for AY 2008-09 will be available in September 2009.</p> <p>4.b. Only 4 SUU students belonging to Sigma Tau Delta submitted and had papers accepted to the annual conference; this number is down from 8 last year and 10 the previous year.</p> <p>4.c. Only 5 English majors or minors participated in the 2008 London Summer Study Abroad Program; the 2009 program was comprised of 7 SUU students (5 of them English majors).</p>	<p>work in the Writing Center and in ENGL 1000 workshops will continue to be assessed as they have been.</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. The London program was one of only three conducted by SUU in 2009, due partly to the poor economy. A shorter stay in London, along with a favorable exchange rate and \$250 scholarship, led to a much lower cost to students in 2009 than in previous years. We will continue working to find ways to keep the cost as low as possible while maintaining the high quality of the program.</p>
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