

2017-2018 Assessment Cycle COLA_English MA

Mission (due 12/4/17)

University Mission

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette offers an exceptional education informed by diverse worldviews grounded in tradition, heritage, and culture. We develop leaders and innovators who advance knowledge, cultivate aesthetic sensibility, and improve the human condition.

University Values

We strive to create a community of leaders and innovators in an environment that fosters a desire to advance and disseminate knowledge. We support the mission of the university by actualizing our core values of equity, integrity, intellectual curiosity, creativity, tradition, transparency, respect, collaboration, pluralism, and sustainability.

University Vision

We strive to be included in the top 25% of our peer institutions by 2020, improving our national and international status and recognition.

College / VP and Program / Department Mission

Mission of College or VP-area

Provide the mission for the College or VP-area in the space provided. If none is available, write "None Available in 2017-2018."

The College of Liberal Arts is dedicated to the advancement of knowledge through teaching, research, and service. The College teaches students to think critically, applying scientific principles and intellectual schema to understand human behavior and society in a diverse world, to express ideas and ideals in a variety of forms, and to understand themselves and others as members of regional and global communities. The intellectual and creative foundations of this enterprise are written and oral communication, analytical and reasoning skills, and the ability to solve problems creatively. Each departmental curriculum presents perspectives from the past, provides an understanding of the present and directs attention to the challenges of the future. As active researchers, faculty in the College work to advance the frontiers of knowledge and our understanding of humanity and the world we live in, and to use that knowledge and understanding to improve the human condition.

Mission of Program / Department

Provide the program / department mission in the space provided. The mission statement should concisely define the purpose, functions, and key constituents. If none is available, write "None Available in 2017-2018."

The Master of Arts in English satisfies the needs of a variety of students: those who plan to continue in a Ph.D. program, those who want to teach at the high school or college levels, and those who wish to acquire professional training in writing or research. Students may concentrate in English and American literature and culture, creative writing, TESOL, linguistics, folklore, professional writing, or rhetoric and composition.

Attachment (optional)

Upload any documents which support the program / department assessment process.

Assessment Plan (due 12/4/17)

Assessment Plan (Goals / Objectives, Assessment Measures and Criteria for Success)

Assessment List

Goal/Objective	Students will demonstrate the ability to formulate a rhetorical argument and utilize evidence and critical theories in support of that argument appropriate to their chosen area of specialization.(Imported)		
Legends	SLO - Student Learning Outcome/Objective (academic units);		
Standards/Outcomes			
Assessment Measures	Assessment Measure	Criterion	Attachments
	Direct - Thesis	A committee of at least three graduate faculty members will evaluate each thesis, and together rate it high pass, pass, or fail. We expect that 95% of formally submitted theses will achieve a score of "pass" or higher. Our goal is for 10% of theses to merit a "high pass."	
	Direct - Comprehensive Exam (graduate level)	Students may opt to write a set of comprehensive exams instead of writing a thesis. Half of the comprehensive exam focuses on the student's chosen specialty; the other half requires the student to answer questions on a broad range of English literature. We expect that 85% of students should pass these written exams on their first attempt.	

Goal/Objective	Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate their rhetorical arguments and results of their research orally in ways appropriate to their chosen area of specialization.(Imported)		
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		material. We expect fewer than 25% of students will achieve averaged scores of below 2 (meets expectations) in more than one category.	
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Goal/Objective	Students will demonstrate familiarity with and understanding of literary themes and forms from the history of English language literature.(Imported)								
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Program / Department Assessment Narrative

The primary purpose of assessment is to use data to inform decisions and improve programs (student learning) and departments (operations); this is an on-going process of defining goals and expectations, collecting results, analyzing data, comparing current and past results and initiatives, and making decisions based on these reflections. In the space below, describe the program's or department's overall plan for improving student learning and/or operations (the "assessment plan"). Consider the following:

- 1) What strategies exist to assess the outcomes?
- 2) What does the program/department expect to achieve with the goals and objectives identified above?
- 3) How might prior or current initiatives (improvements) influence the anticipated outcomes this year?
- 4) What is the plan for using data to improve student learning and/or operations?
- 5) How will data be shared within the Program/Department (and, where appropriate, the College/VP-area)?

Assessment Process

In order to assess the above outcomes, we conduct comprehensive exams twice a year. Faculty members fill out rubrics at each student's defense. The graduate coordinator compiles students' final grades in their plans of study.

This year we have identified a confluence of issues that suggest it is time to overhaul our MA program. We have identified structural disincentives for taking exams rather than doing a thesis. The fact (identified in the previous assessment cycle) that it is generally only unfunded students who take exams is a problem. Moreover, with the change in minimum hours for an MA degree, various of our concentrations want to review their requirements to create a more streamlined and unified MA in English that has similar requirements across concentrations. No major changes will take place during this assessment cycle, but we are in the process of addressing trouble spots identified in prior assessment cycles.

The English Graduate Committee, which consists of all graduate faculty in English, meets once a month to discuss various graduate program issues and initiatives. Overall data from exam results is discussed first with our MA Exam Committee and then with the full English Graduate Committee.

Results & Improvements (due 9/15/18)

Results and Improvement Narratives

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Assessment Findings	Assessment Measure	Criterion	Summary	Attachments of the Assessments	Improvement Narratives
	Direct - Thesis	Has the criterion A committee of at least three graduate faculty members will evaluate each thesis, and together rate it high pass, pass, or fail. We expect that 95% of formally submitted theses will achieve	The rubric for the MA program asks faculty to score students on a scale of 0 (fails) to 3 (exceeds expectations) in these categories: Originality, Analysis of Texts, Depth of Knowledge in Area of Specialization,		- Assessment Process: Targets / Criteria for Success changed: I believe that the rubric we currently use is not aligned with faculty's actual expectations, and I am

		a score of "pass" or higher. Our goal is for 10% of theses to merit a "high pass." been met yet? Not met	and Synthesis. A score of 2 in each category (for a total of 8) reflects meeting expectations, or "Pass." When I averaged the scores, four out of eight students received a score of 8 or higher, and the other four received a score of lower than 8.		assembling an ad hoc task force to revise the rubric this academic year.
	Direct - Comprehensive Exam (graduate level)	Has the criterion Students may opt to write a set of comprehensive exams instead of writing a thesis. Half of the comprehensive exam focuses on the student's chosen specialty; the other half requires the student to answer questions on a broad range of English literature. We expect that 85% of students should pass these written exams on their first attempt. been met yet? Not met	Students in our MA program this year all opted to write a thesis rather than take the MA comprehensive exam.		- Assessment Process: Continuous monitoring: Students are free to choose the exam option or the thesis option, so if students in the next cycle choose the exam option, we will offer assistance in preparing for the exam.

Assessment List Findings for the Assessment Measure level for Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate their rhetorical arguments and results of their research orally in ways appropriate to their chosen area of specialization.(Imported)

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Reflection (Due 9/15/18)

Reflection

The primary purpose of assessment is to use data to inform decisions and improve programs and operations; this is an on-going process of defining goals and expectations, collecting results, analyzing data, comparing current and past results and initiatives, and making decisions based on these reflections. Recalling this purpose, respond to the questions below.

1) How were assessment results shared in the program / department?

Please select all that apply. If "other", please use the text box to elaborate.

Distributed via email

Presented formally at staff / department / committee meetings (selected)

Discussed informally

Other (explain in text box below)

2) How frequently were assessment results shared?

Frequently (>4 times per cycle)

Periodically (2-4 times per cycle)

Once per cycle (selected)

Results were not shared this cycle

3) With whom were assessment results shared?

Please select all that apply.

Department Head (selected)

Dean / Asst. or Assoc. Dean (selected)

Departmental assessment committee (selected)

Other faculty / staff (selected)

4) Consider the impact of prior applied changes. Specifically, compare current results to previous results to evaluate the impact of a previously reported change. Demonstrate how the use of results improved student learning and/or operations.

The results of this cycle are comparable to the previous two cycles. We continue to see students who pass the MA thesis defense but do not necessarily receive scores of meets expectations or exceeds expectations in every category.

5) Over the past three assessment cycles, what has been the overall impact of "closing the loop"? Provide examples of improvements in student learning, program quality, or department operations that are directly linked to assessment data and follow-up analysis.

A large part of closing the loop in this case is simply having the data on which to base assessments. We have continued to increase participation in scoring MA defenses consistently using the rubrics; it is becoming a more consistent habit among faculty. As data collection continues, we will see a more complete picture over time.

Attachments (optional)

Upload any documents which support the program / department assessment process.