



## Program Assessment Report (PAR)

English (ENG) Baccalaureate Degree

REPORT PREPARED by: Flanagan, Erin

ACADEMIC YEAR COVERED BY THIS REPORT: 2020-2021

### I. PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

All students taking a B. A. in English should be able to develop a thesis and sustain a coherent written argument about literature using secondary sources. Students in the Creative Writing Concentration will also be able to write in their chosen creative forms.

### II. PROCEDURES USED FOR ASSESSMENT

#### A. Direct Assessment

The same method was used for both outcomes. Final papers were collected from two sections of the core English major course, ENG 3060, in Spring 2021 to assess all graduates with a BA in English. We also collected two Creative Writing courses from Spring 2021—ENG 4830 and ENG 4850—to assess students in the Creative Writing concentration. ENG 3060 had two sections 8 final papers and 14 final papers. Five papers from each section were randomly provided for assessment by two assessors. ENG 4830 had 16 final papers and 5 final papers were randomly provided for assessment by two assessors. ENG 4850 had 14 final papers and 5 final papers were randomly provided for assessment by two assessors. Because of issues with Aqua Taskstream, 3 of the 10 CW papers were only evaluated by one assessor rather than two.

#### B. Scoring of Student Work

Each learning outcome was assessed by a rubric developed by the department undergraduate committee using AACU models. The four members of the undergraduate committee performed the evaluation. Using Aqua Taskstream the papers were randomly assigned to readers that were not the instructor of record for the

class. Each paper was read and scored by two separate assessors (with the exception of three creative writing papers that were only scored by one).

### **C. Indirect Assessment**

Students complete course evaluations at the end of the semester. The contents are reviewed by the instructor and department chair.

## **III. ASSESSMENT RESULTS/INFORMATION:**

Outcome 1 Graduates will be informed readers, able to formulate readings of texts based on their knowledge of literary historical contexts and of basic critical strategies. Scale 4 = exemplary, 3 = good, 2 = adequate, 1 = poor, and 0 = no evidence. Rubric attached to assessment report. The average score for this criterion was 2.92. The lowest score was 2 and the highest 4. The median score was a 3. Outcome 2 a Graduates will be able to develop a thesis and sustain a coherent written argument about literature using secondary sources. Scale 4 = exemplary, 3 = good, 2 = adequate, 1 = poor, and 0 = no evidence. Rubric attached to assessment report. The average score for this criterion was 2.81. The lowest score was 1.5 and the highest 4. The median score was a 3. Outcome 2 b Graduates will be able to develop a thesis and sustain a coherent written argument about literature using secondary sources. Scale 4 = exemplary, 3 = good, 2 = adequate, 1 = poor, and 0 = no evidence. Rubric attached to assessment report. The average score for this criterion was 2.77. The lowest score was 1.5 and the highest 4. The median score was a 3.

Outcome 1 Graduates will be able to develop a thesis and sustain a coherent written argument about literature using secondary sources. Scale 4 = exemplary, 3 = good, 2 = adequate, 1 = poor, and 0 = no evidence. Rubric attached to assessment report. The average score for this criterion was 2.7. The lowest score was 1.5 and the highest 4. The median score was a 2.5. Outcome 2 Graduates in the Creative Writing concentration will be able to write in their chosen forms. Scale 4 = exemplary, 3 = good, 2 = adequate, 1 = poor, and 0 = no evidence. Rubric attached to assessment report. The average score for this criterion was 3.5. The lowest score was 3 and the highest 4. The median score was a 3.5. Analysis A median score of 2.5 in the “thesis” outcome indicates that this is an area where we should improve, however, the committee feels these numbers are skewed. In the past (and continuing through this assessment), the committee has assessed ENG 3060, which is “Introduction to Literary Study.” This class was chosen because all majors must take it, but as an intro class, it is not an accurate indicator of where students are when they graduate, but instead provides helpful information on where they start the program. Moving forward, the committee will begin assessing all 4000-level lit classes (also required by majors, although they are not required to take the same class as in the case of 3060). This will give a more accurate view of where students are in relation to

the outcomes at graduation. The Creative Writing Outcome had an average score of 3.5 with no scores lower than 3 (“good”). Students performed strongly in their ability to write in their chosen forms.

A median score of 3 in all outcomes indicates that, overall, students are meeting these outcomes successfully. All three averages were just below a score of good. The difference between the highest average score (2.92) and the lowest (2.77) is minor. Outcome one had the strongest performance with highest average (2.92) and highest low score (2). Students are able to be informed readers, able to formulate readings of texts based on their knowledge of literary historical contexts and of basic critical strategies. Outcome 2 had a larger range of scores (1.5 – 4) and a slightly weaker average. This outcome was evaluated across 2 rubrics. Students performed strongly in their ability to develop a thesis and sustain a coherent written argument (2a) with an average score of 2.81. The weakest scoring was in outcome 2b – use of secondary sources – where the average score was 2.77.

#### **IV. ACTIONS TO IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING**

At the early Fall 2021 department meeting, the undergraduate committee chair shared the latest assessment results with the department and requested faculty place a stronger emphasis on teaching the two program learning outcomes for all English majors. Results will not be available from this Fall 2021 assessment by the late Fall 2021 department meeting, but will be shared at the department meeting in Spring 2022. As noted above, going forward the committee will be assessing 4000-level ENG classes rather than ENG 3060 to get a more accurate assessment of the program’s graduates. In the spring, the committee will draft an exit interview for graduating students to gain more feedback on the program. We hope to implement this in Fall 2022. The committee chair has requested papers from Fall 2021 to begin assessment for next year’s general program outcome and assessment of the Professional Writing Concentration.

#### **V. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

Additional documentation, when provided, is stored in the internal Academic Program Assessment of Student Learning SharePoint site.