

Program-Level Assessment: Annual Report

Program Name (no acronyms): Graduate Program in English	Department: English
Degree or Certificate Level: MA and PhD	College/School: College of Arts and Sciences
Date (Month/Year): September 2023	Assessment Contact: Jennifer R. Rust, Associate Chair and Assessment Coordinator, Department of English

In what year was the data upon which this report is based collected? AY 2022-2023

In what year was the program’s assessment plan most recently reviewed/updated? 2015 (new MA assessment plan drafted in 2023)

Is this program accredited by an external program/disciplinary/specialized accrediting organization or subject to state/licensure requirements? NO

If yes, please share how this affects the program’s assessment process (e.g., number of learning outcomes assessed, mandated exams or other assessment methods, schedule or timing of assessment, etc.): N/A

1. Student Learning Outcomes

Which of the program’s student learning outcomes were assessed in this annual assessment cycle? (Please provide the complete list of the program’s learning outcome statements and **bold** the SLOs assessed in this cycle.)

We are in a period of transition to new assessment plans for both the MA and the PhD programs. The 2015 assessment plan has been suspended while we review our existing curriculum and implement new assessment structures.

MA Program: During 2022-2023, we began the process of updating our plan for MA assessment. To this end, the Associate Chair met with the English graduate committee in March 2023 to review our 2015 assessment plan with an eye toward streamlining the artifacts collected and creating more opportunities for closing the loop in a meaningful way for our graduate program. As a result of this meeting, the Associate Chair wrote a new draft MA assessment plan during Summer 2023 that builds on the infrastructure of a new MA portfolio requirement first implemented in 2020. This new MA assessment plan uses achievement-level MA portfolios as artifacts to assess the achievement of program learning outcomes. The English graduate committee reviewed this plan at a September 2023 meeting, during which several small changes were made. Specifically, the graduate committee urged that we begin our new assessment cycle with a particular focus on MA program SLO 1, emphasizing especially the “cultural diversity” component of that SLO, as some concerns about our program coverage in this area have arisen from the graduate student organization (EGO). We hope that our assessment of SLO 1 will contribute to ongoing conversations about whether we need to adjust our graduate curriculum. The revised September 2023 draft of the plan is included below as **Appendix 1**. The newly reconstituted English assessment committee will develop the projected rubric for MA portfolio assessment beginning in Fall 2023, in close consultation with the graduate committee, with the goal of being ready to assess MA portfolios by Fall 2024.

PhD Program: While the 2015 assessment plan is suspended, we have begun reviewing and possibly revising our existing PhD program SLOs as part of a larger process that involves reviewing our course requirements for PhD students and generating course-level SLOs for ENGL 5000 & 6000-level seminars and RA assignments. In September 2023, the Associate Chair met with the English graduate committee to discuss the draft MA assessment plan and to hold an initial discussion about assessment of the PhD program, including evaluating the adequacy of existing SLOs and artifacts required by the 2015 plan. The graduate committee has now initiated a process of reviewing and revising

PhD SLOs: this process remains ongoing in Fall 2023. Our longer-term goal is to achieve a sustainable and productive assessment loop, so we are making informed choices about curricula and pedagogy in our graduate program.

2. Assessment Methods: Artifacts of Student Learning

Which artifacts of student learning were used to determine if students achieved the outcome(s)? Please describe the artifacts in detail, identify the course(s) in which they were collected, and if they are from program majors/graduates and/or other students. Clarify if any such courses were offered a) online, b) at the Madrid campus, or c) at any other off-campus location.

N/A

3. Assessment Methods: Evaluation Process

What process was used to evaluate the artifacts of student learning, and by whom? Please identify the tools(s) (e.g., a rubric) used in the process and **include them in/with this report document** (please do not just refer to the assessment plan).

N/A

4. Data/Results

What were the results of the assessment of the learning outcome(s)? Please be specific. Does achievement differ by teaching modality (e.g., online vs. face-to-face) or on-ground location (e.g., STL campus, Madrid campus, other off-campus site)?

N/A

5. Findings: Interpretations & Conclusions

What have you learned from these results? What does the data tell you? Address both a) learning gaps and possible curricular or pedagogical remedies, and b) strengths of curriculum and pedagogy.

N/A

6. Closing the Loop: Dissemination and Use of Current Assessment Findings

A. When and how did your program faculty share and discuss the results and findings from this cycle of assessment?

N/A

B. How specifically have you decided to use these findings to improve teaching and learning in your program? For example, perhaps you've initiated one or more of the following:

Changes to the Curriculum or Pedagogies

- Course content
- Teaching techniques
- Improvements in technology
- Prerequisites
- Course sequence
- New courses
- Deletion of courses
- Changes in frequency or scheduling of course offerings

Changes to the Assessment Plan

- Student learning outcomes
- Artifacts of student learning
- Evaluation process
- Evaluation tools (e.g., rubrics)
- Data collection methods
- Frequency of data collection

Please describe the actions you are taking as a result of these findings.

N/A

If no changes are being made, please explain why.

7. **Closing the Loop: Review of Previous Assessment Findings and Changes**

A. What is at least one change your program has implemented in recent years **as a result of previous assessment data**?

In 2020, the English graduate program implemented a new exam format for MA students that includes a portfolio or written work in addition to an oral exam. This new exam and portfolio structure was informed in part by graduate assessment activities undertaken between 2016-2018.

B. How has the change/have these changes identified in 7A been assessed?

Our first significant group of MA exams only occurred in Spring 2021. The revised MA assessment plan uses the MA portfolio as an achievement-level artifact to strengthen our graduate assessment practices.

C. What were the findings of the assessment?

Not yet available. We hope to do our first round of assessment under the new MA plan in Fall 2024.

D. How do you plan to (continue to) use this information moving forward?

IMPORTANT: Please submit any assessment tools (e.g., artifact prompts, rubrics) with this report as separate attachments or copied and pasted/appended into this Word document. Please do not just refer to the assessment plan; the report should serve as a stand-alone document. Thank you.

Appendix 1: New MA Assessment Plan Draft - September 2023

Program-Level Assessment Plan

Program: Master of Arts	Degree Level (e.g., UG or GR certificate, UG major, master’s program, doctoral program): MA
Department: English	College/School: College of Arts and Sciences
Date (Month/Year): September 2023 DRAFT	Primary Assessment Contact: English Associate Chair, Graduate Director and Other Assigned Faculty

Note: Each cell in the table below will expand as needed to accommodate your responses.

#	Student Learning Outcomes	Curriculum Mapping	Assessment Methods	
			Artifacts of Student Learning (What)	Evaluation Process (How)
	<p>What do the program faculty expect all students to know or be able to do as a result of completing this program?</p> <p>Note: These should be measurable and manageable in number (typically 4-6 are sufficient).</p>	<p>In which courses will faculty intentionally work to foster some level of student development toward achievement of the outcome? Please clarify the level at which student development is expected in each course (e.g., introduced, developed, reinforced, achieved, etc.).</p>	<p>1. What artifacts of student learning will be used to determine if students have achieved this outcome?</p> <p>2. In which courses will these artifacts be collected?</p>	<p>1. What process will be used to evaluate the artifacts, and by whom?</p> <p>2. What tools(s) (e.g., a rubric) will be used in the process?</p> <p>Note: Please include any rubrics as part of the submitted plan documents.</p>
1	<p>demonstrate a foundational knowledge of literary/rhetorical histories, aesthetics, cultures, and emerging areas of inquiry, including an awareness of cultural diversity within literary traditions</p>	<p>This outcome is introduced in ENGL 5000: Methods of Literary Research. It should be subsequently developed across required MA coursework, which also includes a required course in literary theory (ENGL 5110) and required courses in four of the following literary-historical fields: Medieval Literature, Early Modern Literature, Literature of the Long 19th Century, Modern and/or Contemporary Literature, and Rhetoric and/or Composition. Achievement is demonstrated in the required MA oral exam and portfolio.</p>	<p>To complete the program successfully, MA students are required to do the following, per the English Graduate Handbook: “At the end of the second year, students submit a portfolio of work including a reflection, a professional document, a polished writing sample, and a cv to their advisor. Students also complete an oral examination on a list of 15 works developed in consultation with a committee of three faculty members.” Please see Appendix 2 below for full portfolio guidelines.</p> <p>The English Department will use these achievement-level portfolios to assess each of the MA program SLOs. Each student’s advisor (the oral exam committee chair) should submit copies of student MA portfolios to the English Associate Chair & Assessment</p>	<p>The MA portfolios collected by the Associate Chair / Assessment Coordinator in the Spring will be assessed in the subsequent Fall semester by a rotating assessment committee, consisting of two full-time faculty and the Associate Chair (who will also be the chair of the committee). A draft rubric to be used for MA program assessment is included below, on p. 3 of this plan.</p> <p>The Associate Chair will report the results of yearly MA program assessment to the English Graduate Program Director and Graduate Committee by the end of Fall semester (December) each year. The Graduate Committee will dedicate a full or partial meeting in the Spring</p>

			Coordinator at the end of the Spring semester of each year. The Associate Chair will remind faculty to make these submissions at the end of each semester.	semester (after graduate admissions are completed) to discussing the assessment results and evaluating whether any changes in the program's curriculum or pedagogy are needed.
2	demonstrate knowledge of research expectations, and of theoretical approaches, requisite for advanced study in English, including appropriate research resources and tools	This outcome is introduced in two required courses: ENGL 5000: Methods of Literary Research and ENGL 5110: Literary Theory. It should be subsequently developed in all required MA coursework in literary-historical fields (see above). Achievement is demonstrated in the required MA oral exam and portfolio.	See box 1 above.	See box 1 above.
3	demonstrate an ability to engage productively with relevant critical debates through written and spoken arguments	This outcome is introduced in two required courses: ENGL 5000: Methods of Literary Research and ENGL 5110: Literary Theory. It should be subsequently developed in all required MA coursework in literary-historical fields (see above). Achievement is demonstrated in the required MA oral exam and portfolio.	See box 1 above.	See box 1 above.

Use of Assessment Data

1. How and when will analyzed data be used by program faculty to make changes in pedagogy, curriculum design, and/or assessment practices? *A tentative assessment schedule and feedback structure are provided in the last box above.*
2. How and when will the program faculty evaluate the impact of assessment-informed changes made in previous years?
TBD

Additional Questions

1. On what schedule/cycle will program faculty assess each of the program's student learning outcomes? (Please note: It is not recommended to try to assess every outcome every year.) *We plan to pursue an on-going iterative assessment process, as outlined above, with portfolio artifacts collected at the end of each Spring semester to be assessed during the subsequent Fall semester, with an assessment report provided to the English graduate committee no later than December of each year and a graduate committee meeting on assessment results to be held no later than May of each year. In response to student concerns about the level of engagement with diverse literatures required in our curriculum, the assessment committee, in consultation with the graduate committee, will use MA portfolios to assess MA program learning outcome 1, with a particular emphasis on the expectation that students will achieve "awareness of cultural diversity within literary traditions," in Fall 2024. The subsequent assessment cycles will be determined after we have processed the results of this initial round of assessment.*
2. Describe how, and the extent to which, program faculty contributed to the development of this plan. *This plan was drafted by the Associate Chair of English in consultation with the English graduate committee and Director of Graduate Studies in English. The Associate Chair met with the English graduate committee in March 2023 to work*

out a preliminary plan to use the existing MA portfolio structure to streamline our program-level assessment process. This March meeting provided the basis for a July 2023 draft MA assessment plan. This draft plan was subsequently revised in light of feedback from the graduate committee at a September 2023 meeting. The assessment committee, which consists of 3 full-time English faculty members, will develop the rubric for assessing MA exams during academic year 2023-2024 in close consultation with the graduate committee.

IMPORTANT: Please remember to submit any rubrics or other assessment tools along with this plan.

Appendix 1: DRAFT English MA Program Rubric

NOTE: The English Assessment Committee will complete this rubric during AY 2023-2024.

Department of English: Saint Louis University
MA Program Portfolio Assessment

English MA Program Learning Outcome	Portfolio Exceeds Expectations: Portfolio demonstrates a detailed or complex understanding of the outcome.	Portfolio Meets Expectations: Portfolio demonstrates a basic awareness of the outcome.	Portfolio Fails to Meet Expectations: Portfolio does not demonstrate an adequate awareness of the outcome.
demonstrate a foundational knowledge of literary/rhetorical histories, aesthetics, cultures, and emerging areas of inquiry, including an awareness of cultural diversity within literary traditions			
demonstrate knowledge of research expectations, and of theoretical approaches, requisite for advanced study in English, including appropriate research resources and tools			
demonstrate an ability to engage productively with relevant critical debates through written and spoken arguments			

Qualitative Comments on Portfolio: Please use the box below for open-ended comments (no more than ~150 words).

Appendix 2: MA Portfolio Guidelines from the [English Graduate Handbook](#) (last updated May 2022), p. 25.

MA students are required to produce a final portfolio in order to graduate from the MA program. The portfolio must be turned into the **oral exam committee chair** three weeks prior to the exam for approval. It will not be graded, but it must be deemed satisfactory, according to the criteria below, by the MA exam committee chair in order for the student to move on to the oral exam.

The portfolio should consist of the following documents:

A one-page statement that reflects on the relationship between the student's program of study and their future goals. The statement should be approximately 500 words long. It should make direct references to specific courses, works, readings, essays, and other educational experiences that have shaped the student's experience in the MA program. It should make some effort to speculate as to how the student's MA experience might shape the work they do in the future.

A resume / c.v.

The document should be organized, graphically appealing, and professional.

A professional document

This document could be a proposal for a PhD program, a cover letter for a non-academic job, a teaching philosophy statement, or another relevant professional document. It should be polished, ready to send or use, and well adapted to its intended purpose.

A polished piece of writing

This can be a revised seminar paper, the MA essay, or the MA thesis. It should be a paper of at least 12 p., ready to be used as a writing sample for future professional or academic goals.