Undergraduate Academic Assessment Plan 2012 2013

English

Liberal Arts & Sciences

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English – Liberal Arts and Sciences
Undergraduate Academic Assessment Plan

Mission Statement

Background and General Approach: "English" is an unusually heterogeneous field, even within the humanities, spanning a wide range of subfields, interpretive methodologies, and educational and professional goals. We research and teach not only literature and writing but also film and new media, and we are also a creative writing and film/video production program. In contrast to pre-professional degree programs like engineering or business, which prepare students for specific careers and often in relation to professional standards or benchmarks, the English degree offers a more comprehensive skill set, applicable to a wide array of careers. In recognition of such, some time ago the Department of English at UF replaced its structured curriculum (which had "core" and "distribution" requirements) with a flexible curriculum, in which students take 10 upper-division courses of their choosing. We have in place "Context Models" at the undergraduate level, some of which focus on traditional areas or topics, some of which emphasize newer areas of research and/or interpretive focus. (At the graduate level, these are called "Tracks"). Students can elect to follow these Models, and many do, but we do not want to require such. Our commitment to the flexible curriculum is both practical and philosophical. We strongly believe that while content matters, the development of certain skills in analysis and communication matters equally, perhaps more. The expansion of the curriculum by way of the Model system coincided with a disciplinary shift away from specified knowledge production to critical thinking and analytical skills.

Previous English Mission Statement (from our Academic Learning Compact: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/liberalarts/alc/english.aspx):

English explores the rich diversity of cultures through study of the interaction of cultural objects and contexts. In the English major, you learn how to understand, to communicate about and to produce cultural objects. The study of English does not imply a specific course of study nor a prescribed set of outcomes; instead, you explore the study of language, literature, theory, etc., within different contexts such as American literary history, British literary history, African-American literary history, film and other media studies, genders and sexualities, theory, cultural studies, post-colonial studies, world literatures in English, communications and creative writing.

New Mission Statement:

Home to UF's programs in Creative Writing and Film and Media Studies, The Center for Children's Literature and Culture, and The Institute for the Psychological Study of the Arts, and with vital connections to other units on campus, the Department of English bridges traditional literary studies with new critical and theoretical disciplines. These include: critical theory and cultural studies; creative writing; rhetoric and composition; children's and young adult literature; contact period studies; postcolonial and/or diasporic studies; film studies/film and video production; gender studies and feminist theory; new media; psychology and literature; and imagetext studies.

We see teaching and research as interdependent. Our academic programs take full advantage of faculty research to introduce scholarly innovation directly to the classroom. At every level of instruction, students are challenged and supported through individualized programs of study that balance focus with flexibility. Our flexible curriculum spans periods, genres, and media, fostering careful analysis across disciplines and methodologies. Received traditions are renovated and new and creative intersections of critical and literary practice are fostered within the framework of our "Context Model" system (at the undergraduate level) or our "Track" system (at the graduate level). This insures that the disciplinary freedom of the flexible curriculum is balanced within broadly-defined rubrics of study. Within most courses, as in the development of their individual programs of study, students are encouraged to define and pursue original work and/or creative work and are guided in their progress by faculty mentors, advisors, and models. Our program emphasizes the development of effective communication, creative, analytical and critical thinking skills more than the mastery of specified content.

The study of English is vitally concerned with the texts and contexts of public culture. We seek opportunities to share our research and knowledge for the public good, and to participate in the analysis and production of civic culture. By promoting the study of Anglophone and minority traditions in literature, creative writing, film, and other media, our program of study supports the overall mission of the University to offer "an educational process that links the history of Western Europe with the traditions and cultures of all societies." Because our flexible and progressive curriculum cultivates a responsible understanding of the cultural and material conditions that shape the production of historical and contemporary texts and instructs students in the communication skills necessary to produce materials that disseminate new thought, we align with the College mission to help students "understand our place in the universe" and disseminate knowledge by engaging with "fundamental questions" in the arts and humanities.

(This revised statement is aligned with the **UF Mission Statement** (https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/uf-mission/Pages/home.aspx and the **CLAS Mission Statement** (http://www.clas.ufl.edu/about/index.html)

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

Previous SLOs (see https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/liberalarts/alc/english.aspx)
1. Understand cultural objects by exposure to interpretations and/or the practice of interpretations in different contexts.
2. Effectively produce cultural objects and/or interpretations of cultural objects: texts, films, media, hypertexts, etc.
3. Understand and work with contexts. Context models: 1) Advanced Writing; 2) African-American/African Diaspora Studies; 3) American Literature; 4) British Literature; 5) Children's Literature; 6) Creative Writing; 7) Cultural Studies; 8) Drama/Theater; 9) Feminisms, Genders, & Sexualities; 10) Film and Media Studies; 11) Medieval/Early Modern Studies; 12) Postcolonial Studies; 13) Studies in Theory.
4. Demonstrate the ability to interpret cultural objects.
5. Articulate cultural objects in texts (e.g. essays, term papers, reaction papers, short stories, poems, screenplays, memos, reports, etc.), films or videos, hypertexts, media, etc.

New SLOs:

1. Identify, describe and explain materials, terminologies, methodologies, and theories within one

or more Context Models: 1) Advanced Writing; 2) African-American/African Diaspora Studies; 3) American Literature; 4) British Literature; 5) Children's Literature; 6) Creative Writing; 7) Cultural Studies; 8) Drama/Theater; 9) Feminisms, Genders, & Sexualities; 10) Film and Media Studies; 11) Medieval/Early Modern Studies; 12) Postcolonial Studies; 13) Studies in Theory. *(Content)*

2. Evaluate cultural narratives and/or objects, employing methodologies and criteria appropriate to the Context Model(s). *(Critical Thinking)*
3. Communicate knowledge, ideas, and reasoning effectively in written, oral, or other forms appropriate to the Context Model(s). (Communication)

The table below shows the correlation between the new and previous SLOs. Our new SLOS represent a streamlining and more precise correspondence to the three overarching areas of content, communication, and critical thinking.

New SLOs	Link to Previous SLOs
SLO1: Identify, describe and explain materials, terminologies, and theories within one or more Context Models (13 Models –see above) (*content)*	SLO1: Understand cultural objects by exposure to interpretations and/or the practice of interpretations in different contexts SLO3: Understand and work with contexts
SLO2: Evaluate cultural narratives and/or objects, employing methodologies and criteria appropriate to the Context Model(s) (*critical thinking)*	SLO1, SLO2, and SLO3 SLO 4: Demonstrate the ability to interpret cultural objects
SLO3: Communicate knowledge, ideas, and reasoning effectively in written, oral, or other forms appropriate to the Context Model(s) (*communication)*	SLO2: Effectively produce cultural objects and/or interpretations of cultural objects SLO5: Articulate cultural objects in texts, films or videos, hypertexts, media, etc.

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Curriculum Map/Assessment Timeline

Previous Curriculum Map, from 2011 Undergraduate Catalog (Academic Learning Compact):
https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/liberalarts/alc/english.aspx

Our Academic Learning Compact linked each course to one or more of the five SLOs. Because we do not require any particular 10 courses, or any particular sequence for those courses, **we cannot expect our three new SLOs to be met and measured through particular courses or course sequences.** Instead, we have developed an assessment which will be administered in the inaugural and final semesters of each student's time in the major (first coding as English major, and final/graduating semester). The assessment is a short essay, written in response to a prompt, which will be administered through Sakai and will be entirely independent of courses. The same essay will be administered at each stage. Please see below for information on the essay (prompt) and evaluation rubric.

New Curriculum Map:

Assessment SLOs	Assessment 1 Inaugural semester in the major	Context Model courses*	Assessment 2 Final/graduating semester
Knowledge			
#1	Context Model Essay (pre-test)	I, R	Context Model Essay (post-test)
Communication			
#2	Context Model Essay (pre-test)	II R	Context Model Essay (post-test)
Critical Thinking			
#3	Context Model Essay (pre-test)	I, R	Context Model Essay (post-test)

*Course selection and sequence vary by student choice. Courses can be affiliated with multiple Context Models. A list of courses can be found here:
https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/courses/descriptions/english.aspx

Students can also consult the English Department website for current semester offerings, as we do not run all courses listed in the catalog each semester:
http://www.english.ufl.edu/courses.html

Assessment Cycle

Assessment Cycle for:
English   College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Analysis and Interpretation: May
Improvement Actions: Completed by August 15
Dissemination: Completed by September 15

| Year | 10-11 | 11-12 | 12-13 | 13-14 | 14-15 | 15-16 |
SLOs						
Content Knowledge						
#1	N/A	N/A	X	X	X	X
Critical Thinking						
#2	N/A	N/A	X	X	X	X
Communication						
#3	N/A	N/A	X	X	X	X

NOTE: Because this assessment cycle and our new evaluation method are being initiated in Fall 2012, we marked N/A to indicate that it was not applicable to AY 2010-2011 or AY 2011-2012. Previously we measured SLOs through the successful completion of courses; we did not collect other comprehensive data. Once this AAP is fully approved we will discontinue that pratice of measurement through course completion. In Spring 2012, in anticipation of our AAP in development, we did collect data from graduating seniors in the form of essays, creative work, theses, and other final-term productions, in the hopes that we could begin to measure SLOs while we transitioned to the system described in this document.

Methods and Procedures

Direct Assessment:

REQUIRED OF ALL MAJORS FOR THE BACHELOR OF ARTS IN ENGLISH.

Entering/exiting Major Assessment. One universal essay prompt, requiring a 500-word, timed-entry response, will be composed and submitted through Sakai, in a special section designed for the purpose. Students would be required to write and submit the essay the first term they declare as English majors (regardless of courses) and then again the final term of the semester. Entering majors will be blocked for registration for the second semester in the major until they completed the assessment; graduating majors are required to complete the assessment in order to graduate. (Note: we are already a limited access major, which may make the institution of these requirements easier.)

The assessment will be identical for entering and exiting students. It will focus on the primary Context Model which interests the students. Upon registration in Sakai, students would identify from a pre-set list "what Context Model most closely matches your focus as an English major?". The essay prompt will read as follows:

Briefly explain the Context Model you have selected. What texts, methods, theories, and /or key questions does it include? Identify one of its *most important or influential* texts, theories, methods or techniques. (For example, this might be a book, play, poem, film, visual, digital or theoretical text, or a writing, film editing or production technique). Explain specifically how and why this text, question, method, or technique is significant. Your response should be approximately 500 words; the form will only retain 600.

An assessment committee will double score the essays blindly and holistically, using a rubric tied to the SLOs (see below). Each essay will receive a score from 1-5 for each of the three SLOs, 5 being excellent, 4 good, 3 competent, 2 less competent and 1 clearly deficient. The faculty assessor would simply enter those numbers into the computer program. Significant disagreement (of more than 2 points) would go to a third reader. Scores would then be averaged for each SLO.

Indirect Assessments:

We have a number of indirect assessments, but will maintain records on two: 1) enrollment and graduation statistics, and 2) our exit survey, administered to graduating seniors. We will likely retool the exit survey to better focus it on the new SLOs. Both the statistics and the exit survey results will be evaluated each AY.

SLO Assessment Matrix for 2012-13

2012-13 Student Learning Outcome	Assessment Method	Measurement Procedure
Identify, describe and explain materials, terminologies, methodologies, and theories within one or more Context Models: 1) Advanced Writing; 2) African-American/African Diaspora Studies; 3) American Literature; 4) British Literature; 5) Children's Literature; 6) Creative Writing; 7) Cultural Studies; 8) Drama/Theater; 9) Feminisms, Genders, & Sexualities; 10) Film and Media Studies; 11) Medieval/Early Modern Studies; 12) Postcolonial Studies; 13) Studies in Theory. (Content)	Context model essay pre- and post-test.	Rubric
Evaluate cultural narratives and/or objects, employing methodologies and criteria appropriate to the Context Model(s). (Critical Thinking)	Context model essay pre- and post-test.	Rubric
Communicate knowledge, ideas, and reasoning effectively in written, oral, or other forms appropriate to the Context Model(s). (Communication)	Context model essay pre- and post-test.	Rubric

<u>Direct Assessment:</u>

Entering/exiting Major Assessment. One universal essay prompt, requiring a 500-word, timed-entry response, will be composed and submitted through Sakai, in a special section designed for the purpose. Students would be required to write and submit the essay the first term they declare as English majors (regardless of courses) and then again the final term of the semester. For entering majors, we would block registration for the second semester in the major until they completed the assessment; graduating majors would be required to complete the assessment in order to graduate. (Note: we are already a limited access major, which may make the institution of these requirements easier.)

The assessment will be identical for entering and exiting students. It will focus on the primary Context Model which interests the students. Upon registration in Sakai, students would identify from a pre-set list "what Context Model most closely matches your focus as an English major?". The essay prompt will read as follows:

> Briefly explain the Context Model you have selected. What texts, methods, theories, and /or key questions does it include? Identify one of its *most important or influential* texts, theories, methods or techniques. (For example, this might be a book, play, poem, film, visual, digital or theoretical text, or a writing, film editing or production technique). Explain specifically how and why this text, question, method, or technique is significant. Your response should be approximately 500 words; the form will only retain 600.

An assessment committee will double score the essays blindly and holistically, using a rubric tied to the SLOs (see below). Each essay will receive a score from 1-5 for each of the three SLOs, 5 being excellent, 4 good, 3 competent, 2 less competent and 1 clearly deficient. The faculty assessor would simply enter those numbers into the computer program. Significant disagreement (of more than 2 points) would go to a third reader. Scores would then be averaged for each SLO.

Evaluation Rubric for Entering/Existing Major Assessment

SLO	Excellent 5	Above Average 4	Competent 3	Below Competent 2	Seriously Deficient 1
Know materials, terminologies, methodologies, and theories within one or more Context Models (13) *(Content)*	Demonstrates excellent knowledge of materials, terminology, methods and/or theories within the Context Model. Multiple examples and/or definitions are given which are accurate and informed.	Demonstrates above average knowledge of materials, terminology, methods and/or theories within the Context Model. Knowledge claims are correct and informed.	Demonstrates competent knowledge of materials, terminology, methods and/or theories within the Context Model.	Demonstrates below competent knowledge of materials, terminology, methods and/or theories within the Context Model, and is based in some degree on incorrect assertions, claims, or definitions.	Demonstrates seriously deficient knowledge of the materials, terminologies, methodologies, and theories within the Context Model. The Model is not explained, and/or the essay is based in large degree on incorrect assertions, claims, or definitions.
Communicate knowledge, ideas, and reasoning effectively in written, oral, or other forms appropriate to the Context Model(s). *(Communication)*	Demonstrates excellent communication, possessing elements typical of effective communication, such as strong organization and arrangement of ideas or motifs, compelling evidence, and persuasive prose or the equivalent.	Demonstrates above average communication, possessing most of the elements typical of effective communication, such as strong organization and arrangement of ideas or motifs, compelling evidence, and persuasive prose or the equivalent.	Demonstrates competent communication, but needs significant improvement in one aspect typical of effective communication, such as strong organization and arrangement of ideas or motifs, compelling evidence, and persuasive prose or the equivalent.	Demonstrates below competent communication, with significant improvement needed in more than one aspect typical of effective communication, such as strong organization and arrangement of ideas or motifs, compelling evidence, and persuasive prose or the equivalent.	Demonstrates seriously deficient communication, with significant problems in multiple areas typical of effective communication, such as strong organization and arrangement of ideas or motifs, compelling evidence, and persuasive prose or the equivalent.
Evaluate cultural narratives and/or objects, employing methodologies and criteria appropriate to the Context Model(s). *(Critical Thinking)*	Offers excellent evaluation of an example of a cultural narrative and/or object, employing methodologies and criteria appropriate to the Context Model. Provides insightful and pertinent evaluation of a well-chosen example.	Offers above average evaluation of an example of a cultural narrative and/or object, employing methodologies and criteria appropriate to the Context Model. Provides effective evaluation of an appropriate example.	Offers competent evaluation of an example of a cultural narrative and/or object, employing methodologies and criteria appropriate to the Context Model. The example chosen is appropriate and the paper connects it to the Model sufficently, though it may not develop its evaluation as well as possible.	Offers below competent evaluation of an example of a cultural narrative and/or objects, employing methodologies and criteria appropriate to the Context Model. The example chosen is appropriate but the evaluation does not sufficiently address how the example relates to the Model.	Offers seriously deficient evaluation of an example of a cultural narratives and/or objects, employing methodologies and criteria appropriate to the Context Model. No example is provided, or the example is misidentified or inappropriate. If an example is chosen, the evaluation does not relate it to the Model, or does so incorrectly or illogically.

Indirect Assessments:

We have a number of indirect assessments, but will maintain records on two: 1) enrollment and graduation statistics, and 2) our exit survey, administered to graduating seniors. We will likely retool the exit survey to better focus it on the new SLOs. Both the statistics and the exit survey results will be evaluated each AY.

Assessment Oversight

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