English BA Assessment Plan

Mission Statement:
Through the work of research, service, and teaching, the Department of English is committed to the premise that language and literature reflect and shape the world in which we live. Faculty members conduct ongoing research in an array of sub-fields and interdisciplinary contexts and contribute to academic conversations occurring among humanities scholars on national and international levels. The nationally renowned Writers Conference brings great authors and opportunities for literary discussion to the larger community. Teaching at a wide range of levels, from first-year writers to Ph.D. students, the Department demonstrates the pleasures and value of a liberal arts education by emphasizing critical and creative thinking, by helping students think thoughtfully about cultural diversity, and by teaching strong written communication skills. In the Department of English, students at all levels of the curriculum are prepared for lives of public citizenship as they learn to analyze texts within complex cultural situations, to write and to think rhetorically, and to engage with diverse perspectives.

The Bachelor of Arts in English gives students strong reading, writing, and analytical skills, as well as an understanding of the broader cultural, historical, and literary contexts in which acts of reading and writing take place. The degree, therefore, is a good foundation for the professions of Law and Medicine, and also for a range of careers in areas such as writing, teaching, publishing, new media, and business or non-profit organizations.

Goals:

- **Students will be able to read and interpret literary texts with sophistication.**
  - Students read closely and note textual detail.
  - Students connect texts to other texts, to literary traditions, to historical contexts, and to intellectual paradigms.
  - Students apply a variety of interpretive methods to texts.

  Students will have many opportunities throughout all of their coursework to practice reading and textual analysis. More particularly, these skills are taught and practiced in the required courses 271 and 272. In addition the required survey course sequence (301 and 302 or 303 and 304) asks students to very consciously read texts in connection to literary traditions and historical contexts. The English capstone, 415, helps students consolidate reading and analytical skills before graduation.

- **Students will be able to produce academic writing that is attentive to its purposes and audience.**
  - Students write focused papers that use textual evidence to make an interpretive argument.
  - Students carefully and thoughtfully integrate sources and critical perspectives into their written work.

  Students practice academic writing throughout the curriculum, though specific instruction in writing in the major occurs in the required course 271. The capstone courses 408 and 415 focus on improved, advanced writing skills before graduation.
• Students will be able to use their interpretive skills to think critically about the diverse world around them.
  o Students bring self-awareness to their own use of language and their own perspectives.
  o Students apply methods of textual analysis to other cultural artifacts.
  o Students analyze—and imaginatively connect with—diverse perspectives.

In almost every class in the undergraduate curriculum, students are asked to apply their analytical skills—and their increased understanding of the variety of cultural perspectives that are represented through literary texts—to a consideration of larger cultural issues. While there is not a required course specifically tied to this goal (a requirement that the department considered unnecessary precisely because learning in this goal is so apparent throughout the curriculum), students certainly have very direct opportunities to practice it in 227, 228, 229, 357, 365, 367, 369, 370, and potentially, depending on topic, English 415.

**Indirect Assessment**

• Students in all sections of English 415 will be asked to complete a survey in which they assess their own achievements in each of the three goals.

**Direct Assessment**

• Direct assessment of these three goals will be provided each semester by the faculty members teaching English 415. After reading the students' final, written work of the semester, faculty members will assess student achievement in these goals and will fill out the BA direct assessment form.

**Collection of Assessment**

• BA surveys and BA direct assessment forms will be distributed and collected at the end of each semester by the departmental curriculum committee. The committee will include the direct and indirect assessment findings in the annual assessment report, which will then be forwarded to the department as a whole.
DEPARTMENTAL PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING
2004-2005 ACADEMIC YEAR

Department: English
Program: Undergraduate Major

Mission Statement
The English Department provides quality undergraduate instruction in literature in English, literary criticism and theory, the English language, literacy studies, creative writing, cultural studies, film studies, and related fields. We prepare students for careers in a variety of fields, including teaching and publishing; our students will be well-prepared to pursue graduate and professional degrees in areas where good writing skills and critical appraisal of texts are important (e.g., English and Law).

Student Learning Goals

Student Learning Goal 1: Be a proficient reader of English literary and critical texts.

Objective 1.1: Critically read and interpret texts in literature, rhetoric and linguistics.
Objective 1.2: Know how to access and evaluate knowledge in English studies.
Objective 1.3: Discover intellectual and aesthetic pleasures through literature and language.
Objective 1.4: Know the history of English literature and criticism.

Student Learning Goal 2: Be a proficient writer of English.

Objective 2.1: Produce writing that achieves its rhetorical and artistic goals.
Objective 2.2: Critically read and interpret texts in English studies.
Objective 2.3: Discover intellectual and aesthetic pleasures through writing.
Objective 2.4: Know the history of, and alternate methods for, the study of language and culture.

Student Learning Goal 3: Cultivate interest in, and engagement with, the human world.

Objective 3.1: Know the history of the English language and literature, including historical cultural differences.
Objective 3.2: Understand modern and contemporary cultural differences amongst writers and speakers in English language and literature.
Objective 3.3: Understand cultural and aesthetic differences between speakers and writers of English and those of languages other than English.
### GOAL 1: Be a proficient reader of English literary and critical texts.

| Objective 1.1: Critically read and interpret texts in literature, rhetoric, and linguistics. | All courses | English 271-2 survey; English 209 survey; English 226 survey; English 308 survey | Biennial | Faculty in subspecialties will administer surveys; Curriculum Committee will review results | Curriculum Committee will review results of all assessments and report annually to the department, making recommendations for changes in curriculum or pedagogy. Results are on file and available to the faculty and other stakeholders. The Curriculum Committee will regularly assess the assessment instruments and propose needed changes to the department. |
| Objective 1.2: Know how to access and evaluate knowledge in English studies. | All courses, especially English 271-2 (recommended for majors) and all 400-level courses (two are required). | Selected 400-level portfolio narrative | Annual | Faculty teaching 400-level course will provide Curriculum Committee with a narrative of the review. |
| Objective 1.3: Discover intellectual and aesthetic pleasures through literature and language. | All courses | Senior focus group | Triennial | Consultant will administer and present to the Curriculum Committee |
## DEPARTMENTAL PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING 2004-2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Learning Goals &amp; Objectives</th>
<th>Educational Experiences</th>
<th>Assessment Methods</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
<th>Use of Results and Process for Documentation &amp; Decision-Making</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective 1.4: Know the history of English literature and criticism.</td>
<td>Most courses, esp. English 241-2, 301-2, 303-4, 315-6, 401, 403, 404, 405, 406</td>
<td>Senior focus group Selected 400-level portfolio narrative</td>
<td>Triennial Annual</td>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>Occasionally, the faculty may take part in retreats to discuss curricular &amp; related matters.</td>
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### GOAL 2: Be a proficient writer of English.

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<tr>
<th>Objective 2.1: Produce writing that achieves its rhetorical and artistic goals.</th>
<th>Most courses, esp. English 110, 120, 125, 226, 305, 308, 408, 411-2</th>
<th>English 308 survey</th>
<th>Biennial</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Curriculum Committee will review results of all assessments and report annually to the department, making recommendations for changes in curriculum or pedagogy. Results are on file and available to the faculty and other stakeholders.</th>
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<td>Objective 2.2: Critically read and interpret texts in English studies.</td>
<td>All courses</td>
<td>Surveys Focus Groups Narrative</td>
<td>Biennial Triennial Annual</td>
<td>Faculty Consultant Faculty</td>
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<td>Objective 2.3: Discover intellectual and aesthetic pleasures</td>
<td>All courses</td>
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<td>Biennial Triennial Annual</td>
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### GOAL 2:
**Student Learning Goals & Objectives**

Objective 2.4: Know the history of, and alternate methods for, the study of language and culture.

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<td>Many courses, esp. English 161-2, 209, 226, 305, 308, 309, 370, 408, 411-2, 417, 418, 442</td>
<td>English 209, 308 surveys</td>
<td>Biennial</td>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>Committee will regularly assess the assessment instruments and propose needed changes to the department. Occasionally, the faculty may take part in retreats to discuss curricular &amp; related matters.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Focus group</td>
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<td>Triennial</td>
<td>Consultant</td>
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<td>Narrative</td>
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<td>Annual</td>
<td>Faculty</td>
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### GOAL 3:
**Cultivate interests in, and engagement with, the human world.**

Objective 3.1: Know the history of the English language and literature, including historical cultural differences.

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<td>Many courses, esp. English 209, 241-2, 265, 301-2, 303-4, 315-6, 401, 403, 404, 405, 406, 442</td>
<td>Focus group</td>
<td>Triennial</td>
<td>Consultant</td>
<td>Curriculum Committee will review results of all assessments and report annually to the department, making recommendations for changes in curriculum or pedagogy.</td>
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<td>Objective 3.2: Understand modern and contemporary cultural differences amongst writers and speakers in English language and literature.</td>
<td>Many courses, esp. English 241-2, 265, 303, 304, 320, 321, 322, 330, 331, 332, 357, 359, 365, 369, 370, 409, 415, 418, 419</td>
<td>Focus Group Narrative</td>
<td>Triennial Annual</td>
<td>Consultant Faculty</td>
<td>Results are on file and available to the faculty and other stakeholders. The Curriculum Committee will regularly assess the assessment instruments and propose needed changes to the department. Occasionally, the faculty may take part in retreats to discuss curricular &amp; related matters.</td>
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<td>Objective 3.3: Understand cultural and aesthetic differences between speakers and writers of English and those of languages other than English.</td>
<td>Foreign language requirement (second-year proficiency); 161-2, 209, 241-2, 370, 418, 419</td>
<td>English 209 survey Focus group Narrative</td>
<td>Biennial Triennial Annual</td>
<td>Faculty Consultant Faculty</td>
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