



Final Annual Report

Tennessee Tech University

President

Provost

College of Arts and Sciences

English

English BA



English B.A. Program Mission Statement

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Mission/Vision/Goal Statement

The English BA curriculum is designed to improve students' skills in writing, critical reading, and thinking; to enrich their cultural experience; and to prepare them for all professions requiring a high level of expression, imagination, and intellectual activity, including creative writing, editing, teaching, law, politics, and management.



Program Goal 1 - Department Life & Cultural Opportunities

Define Goal

Improve departmental life and increase cultural opportunities for English majors.

Intended Outcomes / Objectives

- to enrich students' cultural experiences generally
- to invite speakers and allow students and faculty access to their presentations and in informal settings for sharing of ideas
- to encourage theatrical presentations, including student participation, audience access, and talk-backs
- to provide opportunities for students to take advantage of area cultural opportunities



Program Goal 2 - Classroom Technology

Define Goal

Provide up-to-date classroom technology

Intended Outcomes / Objectives

- to address the need raised in an external review of Henderson Hall, to update classroom technology
- to have installed in Henderson Hall new projectors, computers, computer carts, screens, and lighting during 2011-12
- to make such equipment easy to use so it will be seamlessly integrated by instructors into their classes
- to facilitate students' ability to make presentations

External reviews of technology in Henderson Hall were conducted by Bauer Askew Architecture PLLC and Dober, Lidsky, Mathey in April 2010, indicating a need for updating campus technology. Data from these reviews were analyzed and disseminated in department committees, particularly the Curriculum Committee, as well as in department meetings and emails. During 2011-12, Henderson Hall classrooms were given new projectors, computers, computer carts, projection screens, and lighting. The equipment has proven easy to use and both instructors and students have made daily use of it in English department classes for both student presentations and faculty instruction.

Student Learning Outcome 1 - Effective Reading & Writing

Define Goal

Students will demonstrate the capacity to write and speak clearly, read perceptively, and think critically.

Intended Outcomes / Objectives

- to introduce, reinforce, and encourage mastery of student skills in reading, writing, and critical thinking throughout the curriculum

Student Learning Outcome 2 - Understanding Literary Traditions

Define Goal

Students will demonstrate understanding of historical traditions in British and



American literature.

Intended Outcomes / Objectives

- to introduce students to American and British literature
- to instruct and measure student progress in attaining understanding of traditions of American and British literature

Student Learning Outcome 3 - Understanding Diversity & Cultural Expression

Define Goal

Students will demonstrate understanding of how written and spoken language expresses diverse cultural experiences.

Intended Outcomes / Objectives

- to introduce students to the written and spoken language expressions of representative authors from diverse groups.
- to promote among students understanding of diverse cultural experiences

Student Learning Outcome 4 - Understanding English Language Development

Define Goal

Students will demonstrate understanding of the functions and historical development of the English language.

Intended Outcomes / Objectives

- to instruct students in the history of the English language
- to introduce and reinforce concepts of English language function and grammar

Assessment: Annual Report

Goal/ Outcome/ Objective: Goals 1 and 2; S.L.O.s 1, 2, 3, and 4

Type of Tool: Annual Unit Report

Rationale

This report, completed each year by the department chair, digests information from annual faculty effort reports as well as summarizing the highlights of general department accomplishments during the year. Information includes publications in peer-reviewed journals and conferences; books published; grants awarded, internally



and externally; faculty and student presentations; co-curricular activities, faculty awards, and student awards.

Frequency of Assessment: annually

 **Assessment: CCTST (California Critical Thinking Skills Test)**

Goal/ Outcome/ Objective: S.L.O. 1

Type of Tool: Exit Exam, Peer Assessment

Rationale

CCTST assesses students' critical thinking skills.

Frequency of Assessment: Every year

 **Assessment: ENGL 4995-Senior Colloquium Student Oral Presentations**

Goal/ Outcome/ Objective: Outcome #1

Type of Tool: Capstone Project, Rubric

Rationale

A rubric was developed in 2012-13 to assess student oral presentations in our departmental capstone course, English 4995-Senior Colloquium. The rubric was used to assess presentations in the capstone in Spring 2013, Spring 2014, and Spring 2016.

Frequency of Assessment: biennially

 **Assessment: ETS Major Field Achievement Test: Literature in English**

Goal/ Outcome/ Objective: Outcomes 1, 2, 3, and 4

Type of Tool: Exit Exam

Rationale

The ETS Major Field Achievement Test in Literature provides a mean score but also subscores in the areas of Literature 1900 and Earlier (Outcomes 1, 2, 3, and 4), Literature 1901 and Later (Outcomes 1, 2, 3, and 4), Literary Analysis (Outcomes 1, 3, and 4), and Literary History and Identification (Outcomes 1 and 4). Additionally, "assessment indicators" show which questions students answered correctly, by area.

Frequency of Assessment: every semester



 **Assessment: Exit Interviews**

Goal/ Outcome/ Objective: Goal 1; Outcomes 1, 2, 3, and 4

Type of Tool: Survey

Rationale

The Exit Interviews, which are both written and oral, provide students the opportunity to discuss the extent to which they have fulfilled Student Outcomes and to make suggestions for improving the English BA program.

Frequency of Assessment: Every semester

 **Assessment: Five-Year Audit**

Goal/ Outcome/ Objective: Outcomes 1, 2, 3, and 4

Type of Tool: Other

Rationale

The Academic Audit conducted by TBR looks at program goals and the processes the department uses to achieve those goals. The focal areas examined are curriculum/co-curriculum, designing teaching and learning methods, developing student learning assessment, and assuring implementation of quality education. The audit also required the BA English program to identify strengths and weaknesses and to make recommendations for initiatives to address weaknesses.

 English Self-Study (2011)

Frequency of Assessment: Every five years

 **Assessment: IDEA Teaching Effectiveness Surveys**

Goal/ Outcome/ Objective: Outcomes 1, 2, 3, and 4

Type of Tool: Survey

Rationale

IDEA student surveys provides instructors with information on content of courses and teaching technique, as well as providing indicators for evaluating teaching effectiveness in faculty evaluations.

Frequency of Assessment: Every semester



Assessment: NSSE

Goal/ Outcome/ Objective: Goal 1; Outcomes 1, 2, 3, and 4

Type of Tool: Survey

Rationale

NSSE (the National Survey of Student Engagement) assesses students' experience with ideas and performance (e.g., revision, group work, exposure to cultural events). NSSE also assesses students' confidence in their writing and speaking abilities. Sadly, student participation is low; as well, English program students are grouped with Communication, Foreign Language, History, and Undeclared students, so data would be of limited utility.

Frequency of Assessment: Every other year



Results: Annual Report

Goal/Objective/Outcome Number: Goals 1 and 2; S.L.O.s 1, 2, 3, and 4

Results

The report for 2016 is attached.

Attachments

 English Annual Report 2016

 English_ANNUAL_REPORT_FOR_2015



Results: California Critical Thinking Skills Test

Goal/Objective/Outcome Number: Outcome #1

Results

California Critical Thinking Skills Test

	2015-16		2016-17	
	Mean	N*	Mean	N*
ENGL	14.5	10	16.4	19
TTU total	16.9	1485	-	-
CCTST	17.1	-	16.2	-

Attachments

No items to display.



Results: ENGL 4995-Senior Colloquium Student Oral Presentations

Goal/Objective/Outcome Number: Goal #2, Outcome #1

Results

ENGL 4995: Senior Colloquium

Spring 2017: Why We Write

Tony Baker

Assessment of Students' Oral Presentations in Capstone

(5) excellent; (4) very good; (3) good; (2) fair; (1) poor

RESULTS

spring 2017 Trait	n=20 Mean score	5) excellent	4) very good	3) good	2) fair	1) poor	0) fail
1. clear thesis statement	4.5	14	5				1
2. well-organized main points	4.35	14	2	3			1
3. effective rhetorical strategies	4.45	15	2	2			1
4. sources appropriate	4.45	13	6				1
5. terms explained; topic appropriate	4.35	12	6	1			1
6. visible, easily readable visual aid	4.5	15	3	1			1
7. correct diction, syntax, usage, etc.	4.65	17	2				1
8. few fillers; extemporaneous style	4.3	15	2		1	1	1
9. dynamics, eye contact, attire	4.35	15	1	2	1		1
10. welcoming	4.65	17	2				1
avg. per trait	4.455						

Attachments

No items to display.



Results: ETS Major Field Achievement Test: Literature in English

Goal/Objective/Outcome Number: Outcomes 1, 2, 3, and 4

Results

Major Field Test Results

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The results in Spring, with 10 students testing, were more clearly above the national average, and a very gratifying result for the department.

	TTU	NATIONAL	n*
2016-17			
Fall	141	153.1	1
Spring	157	153.1	10

Major Field Test Subscores

	Subscore 1	Subscore 2	Subscore 3
	Literature	Literature	Literary
	1900 & earlier	1901 & later	Analysis
Fall 2016			
TTU (n=1)	41	40	45
National	53	53.4	52.9
Spring 2017			
TTU	58	54	56
National	53	53.4	52.9

Assessment Indicators

		Mean Percent Correct	
		Fall 2016 (n=1)	Spring 2017 (n=10)
British Literature Pre-1660		44	55
British Literature 1660-1900		38	46
American Literature to 1900		44	58
British and American Literature 1901-1945		44	48
Literature in English Since 1945		46	53
Literary History		47	54
Identification		39	43
Literary Theory		33	46



Attachments

No items to display.



Results: English Program Events and Initiatives

Goal/Objective/Outcome Number: Goal 1

Results

Because part of the department's mission is to enrich students' cultural experience, the department strives to invite speakers, encourage theatrical presentations, and provide opportunities for students to take advantage of area cultural opportunities, as well as partaking in their own cultural initiatives. In-house funding for this was limited in 2016-17 due to budgetary restrictions; our Bird is the Word series was on hiatus for much of the year because of this, and we were also short on money used in the past to fund alumni visits. We expect these funds and activities to be restored in 2017-18. Nevertheless, we kept a commitment to maintaining a consistent schedule of cultural events. Additionally, we have actively worked to improve networking in career field through strengthening ties with alumni and having English majors from past years tell about their career successes, and, through W.E.S.T., involved our faculty and graduate students in the improvement of writing capabilities for upper-division and graduate students across campus.

- The department hosted a **Center Stage** event with world-renowned novelist **Junot Diaz**, including a talk by Diaz, a Q&A in a smaller setting with English majors, moderated by the Assistant Professor Brian Williams, and a more intimate visit with a dozen students and faculty over dinner (Fall 2016).
- The department has received Center Stage event funding to invite **former U.S. Poet Laureate Robert Haas** for a poetry reading, Q&A, and meeting with majors (Fall 2017).
- **The English Faculty Research Series** had several events: Dr. Paulina Bounds presented "Planet Linguatude: linguistic perceptions around us," Sept., 2016; Dr. Kristen Deiter presented "Shakespeare's Juliet and Roman Catholics in 1595: Resisting Authority while Conforming Outwardly," October 2016; and Dr. Josephine McQuail presented "Women Write Frame: On New Zealand Writer Janet Frame," in March, 2017. Additionally, in a talk sponsored by the Faculty Research Committee, Dr. Ted Pelton presented "Man, I'm Beat: Kerouac's New York, on a Budget, with Millennials," in February, 2017.
- **The Tech Players**, in cooperation with the Theatre concentration in English, presented a full season of theatre at various venues on campus and in Cookeville while the Backdoor Playhouse was being renovated, including Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, in August, 2016; *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare, Abridged*, in November, 2016; *The Vagina Monologues* in February, 2017; two short plays at Cookeville Performing Arts Center: *Trifles* By Susan Glaspell and *Mud* by Maria Irene Fornes, also in February, 2017; and *First Date* in April 2017. In addition, Tech Players staged Improv Nights in both Fall and Spring, as well as numerous workshops throughout the year.



- **“Up on the Mountain” Bluegrass Series** – In response to a proposal from graduate student Andrew Chaney, the department inaugurated this music series, which had three events in Spring 2017: Dan Pankhurst; Darren Nicholson; and TTU English faculty folk musicians Graham and Bettye Kash
- **Alumni visits** -- Theatre artist alums Matt Bassett and Tia Shearer met with students interested in pursuing careers in the theatre in April 2017. This category was negatively impacted by budget concerns, and will be augmented again in 2017-18.
- As a member of the **Associated Writing Programs**, the English department distributed 40 copies of AWP Chronicle 6 times a year to students in our Writing concentration and other interested students and faculty. Chronicle features articles on creative writing, interviews with contemporary authors, and listings of grants and publishing opportunities for creative writers.
- In May, English published its second annual issue of **One for the Books, the English department newsletter**, which featured an interview with faculty member Kris Pickering by English Chair Ted Pelton; an article about senior Kelsey Tylor, who won the Arts & Sciences awards (the first English major to do so in 13 years); as well as news about recent grads, alumni, and the Tech players
- **The Writing Excellence Studio at Tech (W.E.S.T.)**, dedicated to tutoring upper-division and graduate students across campus and giving English graduate students experience in working with students in a variety of professional discourses across campus, opened in its new, permanent site in Foundation Hall.
- ENGL 4340 class members and guests participated in a **marathon public reading of Jack Kerouac’s *On the Road***, at the Talon Theatre, in Foundation Hall, in September 2016. The fundraiser helped pay for student travel to New York City as part of an EDGE QEP class on The Beat Generation.
- ENGL 4231/5231, Death and Dying in Victorian Literature, also making use of an EDGE QEP grant, brought students to **Rugby, TN**, to visit archives in the re-creation Victorian-era village established there.

Attachments

No items to display.



Results: Exit Interviews

Goal/Objective/Outcome Number: Goal 1; Outcomes 1, 2, 3, and 4

Results

Survey Questions for Graduating English BA Students

1. What factors led you to major in English at TTU?



2. What aspects of the BA program do you consider its strengths?
3. In what areas do you think the program might be improved?
4. Are you satisfied with the quality of advisement and other support you received?
5. Has the English BA program helped you clarify your career goals?
6. Review the learning outcomes (below) of the English BA program. Do you feel that your work in the program has enabled you to meet any or all of these outcomes? Please explain...
 - the capacity to write and speak clearly, read perceptively, and think critically;
 - understanding of historical traditions in British and American literature;
 - understanding of how written and spoken language expresses diverse cultural experiences;
 - understanding of the functions and historical development of the English language.

Summary of Strengths and Weaknesses from English Majors' Exit Interviews (14 interviews)

Strengths

- Passionate faculty, engaged, knowledgeable, wanting to see students succeed, each making the subject of their specialization interesting; often students indicated "most" faculty like this, while a minority are "unapproachable" (7 mentions)*
- Small classes and sense of community (3 mentions)*
- Encouragement from faculty and advisors; support for one's interests and goals (2 mentions)
- PC program emphasizes real world applications (1 mention)*
- Specialized, single-author classes (Faulkner, Shakespeare, etc.) were particularly strong, when available (1 mention)

Weaknesses

- Required classes are sometimes offered at the same time (2 mentions)*
- Some faculty cold, don't learn your name, or are unapproachable (2 mentions)
- Deficient in more modern literature (2 mentions)
- More emphasis on internships, better career prep would be helpful (2 mentions)
- The Foreign Language requirement is too demanding (2 mentions)
-
- A wider variety of courses could be offered or accepted for credit in the major, particularly in related fields like art or journalism, or more specialized creative writing (such as writing romance genre) (2 mentions)
-
- Fewer "outreach" activities than other departments; more should be done to attract majors (1 mention)*
- Deficient in "diverse cultural experiences" (1 mention)
- Survey courses are too broad to be meaningful (1 mention)



* = mentioned also in 2015-16 surveys

Advisement satisfaction

10 students surveyed in 2016 were very satisfied with Advisement they had received; 2 students were unsatisfied or had reservations.

Outcomes

All 12 students surveyed were satisfied that outcomes 1 and 2 had been met, and 11 students were satisfied outcomes 3 and 4 had been met. One student was not satisfied that the outcome "understanding of how written and spoken language expresses diverse cultural experiences" had been met; one student (a different one) was not satisfied that the outcome "understanding of the functions and historical development of the English language" had been met.

Attachments

No items to display.



Results: NSSE

Goal/Objective/Outcome Number: outcomes 1, 2, 3, and 4

Results



	NSSE 2014: Arts & Humanities comparative data	
	TTU A&H senior Mean	Carnegie A&H Mea
Attended an art exhibit, play or other arts performance (dance, music, etc.)	2.4	2.0
Coursework emphasized: Analyzing an idea, experience, or line of reasoning in depth by examining its parts	3.0	3.1

There were no data for Arts & Humanities in the 2016 report, presumably because not enough students participated for the data to be accurate.

Arguably relevant 2016 data in the Executive Summary of all TTU students includes the

Strengths:

First year students were more likely to have "attended an art exhibit, play, or other arts performance (dance, music, etc.)" (TTU mean: 2.2; Carnegie Class: 1.9)

Weaknesses:

First year students were less likely to have "experience at TTU [that] contributed to clarifying personal code of ethics" (TTU mean 2.4; Carnegie Class: 2.8)

Seniors were less likely to have had education that "included diverse perspectives (political, religious, racial/ethnic, gender, etc.)" (TTU mean: 2.3; Carnegie Class: 2.7)

Seniors were less likely to have "had discussions during the school year with people of an ethnicity other than your own?" (TTU mean: 2.9; Carnegie Class: 3.2)

Attachments

No items to display.