

**Institutional Effectiveness Report  
2018-19**

**Program:** English BA

**College and Department:** College of Arts & Science - English

**Contact:** Linda Null

**Mission:** 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 Goals:**

PG 1: Enrich English major through departmental life and cultural opportunities.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

SLO 1: Students will demonstrate the capacity to write and speak clearly, read perceptively, and think critically.

SLO 2: Students will demonstrate understanding of historical traditions in British and American literature.

SLO 3: Students will demonstrate understanding of how written and spoken language expresses diverse cultural experiences.

**Assessment Methods:**

*PG 1: Departmental life and cultural opportunities*

1. Annual Report - Departmental Life & Cultural Opportunities

The department yearly collects information from annual faculty effort reports as well as summarizing the highlights of general department accomplishments during the year. Information includes curricular and co-curricular activities offered.

2. Tracking Sheet of student participation in English Program Events and Initiatives

*SLO 1: Write and speak clearly, read perceptively, and think critically*

1. California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST)

The California Critical Thinking Skills Test is administered as a senior exit exam for all graduates. CCTST assesses students' critical thinking skills. The department's threshold of acceptability is to be in the top half of majors tested.

2. ENGL 4995 senior Colloquium Oral Presentation

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, Spring 2016, Spring 2017, Spring 2018, and Spring 19.

Threshold of acceptability: 85% of students will score Excellent or Very Good in each category of evaluation

3. Senior Exit Interviews

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.

*SLO 2: Historical traditions in British and American literature*

1. ETS Major Field Achievement Test:

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

Thresholds: Minimum Performance: 3 semester average at 38%; Target Performance: 3 semester average at 55% or better

2. Senior Exit Interviews

*SLO 3: Written and spoken language expresses diverse cultural experiences*

1. National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE):

NSSE 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 is of limited utility as a measure of this program.

A departmentally developed curriculum map can be found in Appendix 1 that shows the connections between courses and student learning outcomes.

**Results:**

*PG 1: Departmental life and cultural opportunities*

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. Through W.E.S.T., we have involved our faculty and graduate students in the improvement of writing capabilities for upper-division and graduate students across campus. Listings below are not comprehensive, but give a sense of the range of events and initiatives in the department. There were upwards of a thousand individual attendees at these events during the course of the year, including students, faculty, and members of the local community.

- Center Stage literary visit - The department hosted a Center Stage event with Teju Cole, one of the leading voices in African-American fiction, who presented from his fiction and from his work as New York Times photography editor (October 18, 2018). He was introduced by Brian Williams. After the evening event, about a dozen faculty and students shared dinner with the visiting author, an intimate and exciting conclusion the day's events. A second Center State literary visit occurred on February 2, 2019, when Coleman Burks and Eugene Frieson presented an evening with Rumi.
- "Bird is the Word" - Our in-house literary arts series featured visits by Thaddeus Rutkowski, novelist and creative nonfiction writer, author of six books, and winner of the Asian-American Writer's Workshop Member's Choice Award, October 27, 2018; readings January 31, 2018, by department poet Becca Klaver and department chair and fiction writer Ted Pelton, reading from their published and recent work; a visit by California-based literary artist Jenniffer Tamayo, a queer, migrant, formerly undocumented LatinX poet, essayist, and performer, who read from her work in print and staged participatory performances with students and faculty, March 1, 2018. Both Rutkowski and Tamayo did afternoon workshops prior to their performances, where students from across campus were invited to create their own works in response to prompts from the visiting artists.
- The Tech Players, in cooperation with the Theatre concentration in English, and after of two years of productions staged at various locations on campus and in the city of Cookeville, presented a full season of theatre at the renovated Backdoor Playhouse. November 9-18, 2018, Theatre professor Mark Harry Creter directed the musical, *Chicago*, to sellout crowds; next, graduate student Joe Clark directed the haunting, futuristic, sci-fi crime drama, *The Nether*, Feb. 8-17; finally, the annual Dorothy Pennebaker Memorial Spring Production featured *Big Love*, a contemporary re-making and send-up of an ancient Aeschylus play, April 5-14, 2018. In addition, Tech Players staged Improv Nights in both Fall and Spring, as well as numerous workshops throughout the year.
- 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.
- 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, offered a "branch" service in Clement Hall to help Engineering students with their writing.
- In a thrilling, participatory year-end event, the department staged the release party of the revitalized and renamed literary magazine, *The Iris Review*, featuring roughly two dozen student and faculty readers at an event attended by well over a hundred. The Ivy Review was produced by a new literary magazine class at TTU, and published various members from all walks of the university community.

*SLO 1: Write and speak clearly, read perceptively, and think critically*

This is the most recent available data for the California Critical Thinking Skills Test.

|           | 2015-16 |      | 2016-17 |    | 2017-18 |      | 2018-19 |      |
|-----------|---------|------|---------|----|---------|------|---------|------|
|           | Mean    | N*   | Mean    | N* | Mean    | N*   | Mean    | N*   |
| ENGL      | 14.5    | 10   | 16.4    | 19 | 15.29   | 21   | 18.0/78 | 17   |
| TTU total | 16.9    | 1485 | -       | -  | 17.55   | 1260 | 16.8/76 | 1515 |
| CCTST     | 17.1    | -    | 16.2    | -  | -       | -    | 15.4/74 |      |

ENGL 4995 Oral Presentation Rubric

| Semester    | % Excellent or Good |
|-------------|---------------------|
| Spring 2016 | 89%                 |
| Spring 2017 | 72%                 |
| Spring 2018 | 87%                 |

*SLO 2: Historical traditions in British and American literature*

Major Field Test Results

|   | Mean Percent Correct |               |               | 3 semester average |
|---|----------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------|
|   | FY 2017 (n=11)       | FY2018 (n=12) | FY2019 (n=15) |                    |
| British Literature Pre-1660               | 54                   | 46            | 44            | 48                 |
| British Literature 1660-1900              | 45                   | 37            | 39            | 40                 |
| American Literature to 1900               | 57                   | 47            | 51            | 52                 |
| British and American Literature 1901-1945 | 48                   | 47            | 44            | 46                 |
| Literature in English Since 1945          | 52                   | 45            | 47            | 48                 |
| Literary History                          | 53                   | 49            | 46            | 49                 |
| Identification                            | 43                   | 35            | 42            | 40                 |
| Literary Theory                           | 45                   | 41            | 36            | 41                 |

*SLO 3: Written and spoken language expresses diverse cultural experiences*

NSSE: TTU English Senior Mean

|  | 2017 | 2019 | 2020 |
|--|------|------|------|
| Attended an art exhibit, play or other arts performance (dance, music, etc.)                               | 2.3  | 2.3  | 2.3  |
| Coursework emphasized: Analyzing an idea, experience, or line of reasoning in depth by examining its parts | 3.0  | 3.3  | 3.3  |

**Modifications for Improvement:**

*SLO 1: Write and speak clearly, read perceptively, and think critically*

The English Department focuses on critical thinking and creative inquiry because those concepts are the topics of recent QEPs. The chart below shows the number of faculty with QEP grants since 2016-2017. Faculty who receive these grants must have special training in incorporating critical thinking/creative inquiry into their courses.

| 2016-2017 | 2017-2018 | 2018-2019 |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 2         | 2         | 4         |

Student performance on the CCTST improved over the last year. The English Department will continue to apply for and implement QEP courses.

**Appendices**

1. English BA Curriculum Map
2. ENGL 4995 Senior Colloquium rubric

**Appendix 1: English BA Curriculum Map**

| Learning Outcomes   | Required Courses  |                                    |                                  |                                  |                                   |                     |                           |
|---|---|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
|   | 3000<br>Introduction<br>to English<br>Methods &<br>Research | 3810<br>British<br>Literature<br>I | 3820<br>British<br>Literature II | 3910<br>American<br>Literature I | 3920<br>American<br>Literature II | 4121<br>Shakespeare | 4995 Senior<br>Colloquium |
| Demonstrate the capacity to write and speak clearly, read perceptively, and think critically      | I   | R                                  | R                                | R                                | R                                 | R                   | M, A                      |
| Demonstrate understanding of historical traditions in British and American literature             |   | I                                  | R                                | I                                | R                                 | R,A                 | M,A                       |
| Demonstrate understanding of how written and spoken language express diverse cultural experiences |   | I                                  | R                                | I                                | R                                 | R, A                | M                         |
| Demonstrate understanding of the functions and historical development of the English language     |   | I                                  | R                                | R                                | R                                 | R, A                | M, A                      |

**Appendix 2: ENGL 4995 Senior Colloquium rubric**

|  | Excellent | Very Good | Good | Fair | Poor | N/A |
|--|-----------|-----------|------|------|------|-----|
| <b>Organization/ Content</b>   |           |           |      |      |      |     |
| Student presented a clear thesis statement at the beginning of the presentation.   |           |           |      |      |      |     |
| The presentation contained well-organized main points related to the thesis.   |           |           |      |      |      |     |
| Student developed the main points using effective rhetorical strategies.   |           |           |      |      |      |     |
| Sources used were appropriate to the purpose of the presentation and were managed well.  |           |           |      |      |      |     |
| Technical/audience-specific terms were explained; topic was appropriate for designated audience.                               |           |           |      |      |      |     |
| <b>Visual Aid</b>  |           |           |      |      |      |     |
| The visual aid was visible, easily readable, and presented in a non- distracting manner using appropriate technological media. |           |           |      |      |      |     |
| <b>Presentation Quality</b>  |           |           |      |      |      |     |
| Student presented using correct diction, syntax, usage, grammar, and mechanics.  |           |           |      |      |      |     |
| Student used few fillers and maintained an extemporaneous style.   |           |           |      |      |      |     |
| Speaker dynamics, eye contact, and attire were appropriate for the purpose and context of the presentation.                    |           |           |      |      |      |     |
| Student created a welcoming environment for audience interaction, including dialogue and questions, where appropriate.         |           |           |      |      |      |     |