Assessment of Student Learning Plan (ASLP): <u>English</u>

<u>2016-17 Academic Year</u>

A. College, Department, Date

College   College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences
Department   English
Date   May 2017

B. Contact Person for the Assessment Plan

Name and title Gerald Peters, Chair

C. Degree Program

*Name of Degree Program*_B.A. in English

D. <u>Assessment of Student Learning: Program Assessment</u>

<u>Step 1: Identify the Student Learning Outcomes</u> (SLO's)

a. *Do you have your student learning outcomes published on your department's website?* Yes *http://usm.maine.edu/eng/overview*

Student Learning Outcomes for the Program

1. Every major will produce a substantial body of analytical writing that uses evidence and employs formal standard written English to make a focused argument.

2. Every major will read a range of complex cultural texts and exhibit knowledge of different genres and literary history.

3. Every major will use advanced research tools and knowledge of basic literary terms to compile, evaluate, and document appropriate primary and secondary sources for a substantial capstone project.

4. Every major will critically examine ad synthesize multiple, complex, often contradictory arguments and perspectives.

5. Every major will demonstrate knowledge and comprehension of texts and traditions of language and literature written in English as well as their social, cultural, theoretical and historical contexts.

b. *Please identify **which of your student learning outcome(s) were assessed this past academic year**. (One or more of the outcomes and corresponding assessment plans could come from your department's CORE Course Blueprint(s).*

Last year the department identified #3 and #4 outcomes for assessment. Beginning in Fall 2014 the department began collecting ungraded initial papers from students in the major prerequisite course, ENG 140 Reading Literature, to gather data on writing skills on students entering the major. Ungraded initial and final papers in the major's "gateway" course Introduction to Literary Studies were also collected to assess outcome four. Seminar final papers were also collected to assess outcome #3.

Because the Department was fully occupied in writing its "Internal Review" during the Fall Semester 2016 and Spring Semester 2017, the department did not develop any specific common means of assessment in ENG 220, 225, or the seminar. Instead, the department chose to focus specifically on the courses that needed most urgent attention for three reasons. First, because of the retrenchment process and consequent downsizing of faculty over the previous five years (the English Department lost 8 out of 20 of its full-time tenured faculty members), the department was forced to redesign its major, reducing it from a former 48 credit hours to 36. This significantly changed the requirements for the major, shifting the enrollments in several courses. Courses that had been required were now optional and new required courses had unexpectedly larger enrollments. These changes were amplified by an unusual increase in enrollments (over 14%) in English over the past two years. There was general agreement among professors responsible for teaching ENG 245 (the introduction to the major) that the course was overburdened with expectations and need to be more closely integrated with ENG 140, the new prerequisite to 245. Although initially ENG 245 was designed to focus on both LO #3 and #4, it was determined that ENG 140 should provide a stronger focus on the use of primary and secondary sources in their writing and a more thorough grounding in the use of basic literary terminology. It was also determined that students should have a more thorough grounding in close reading skills in ENG 140 in order to better prepare them for ENG 245. It was also crucial that the objectives in 140 be better aligned with those in 245 because it would be offered by several part-time instructors.

By putting more emphasis on LO # 1 and #3 in ENG 140, teachers of ENG 245 were able to concentrate more fully on LO #2 and #4. In 2016/17, with the help of a Title III Grant, the department invited experts in new critical areas of literary study to update ENG 245 on some of the current developments in the field. A final department meeting was held to discuss the Title III initiative and to develop a more comprehensive strategy to link the learning outcomes of ENG 140 with those of ENG 245.

Since the demand for ENG 140 both as a prerequisite to ENG 245 and as a General Education requirement has exceeded full-time faculty's ability to teach every section and offer the necessary upper-level courses, the course is now also being offered by both part-time and full-time faculty. During the May meeting, part-time and full-time faculty shared syllabi as well as their experiences teaching the courses so that overall expectations could be better aligned. It was determined that they would meet again early in the Fall semester to develop common assignments that would address designated learning results both for ENG 140 and ENG 245. A set of texts was ordered to help faculty develop common strategies for teaching both courses.

c. *Do you have a **matrix or curriculum map** showing when your student learning outcomes are assessed and in which courses? No*

   i. *If yes, do you have this map published on your website? Please indicate url or attach a copy of the curriculum map.*

Step 2: Assessment Methods Selected and Implemented

d. *Identify which direct measures (other than course grades) that were used to determine whether students achieved the stated learning outcomes for the degree.*
   Beginning in Fall 2014 and every semester thereafter, we collected the following:

   1) ungraded initial papers from students in the major prerequisite course, ENG 140, Reading Literature, to gather data on writing skill on students entering the major;

   2) ungraded initial and final papers in the major's methods course, ENG 245, Introduction to Literary Studies to assess outcomes #3 and #4.

e. *Briefly describe when you implemented the assessment activity, and if a scoring rubric was used to evaluate the expected level of student achievement. (This information may be shown on your curriculum map).*

Step 3: Using the Assessment results to Improve Student Learning

a. *Briefly describe your unit's process of reviewing the program assessment results (i.e. annual process by faculty committee, etc).*

We will be assessing our learning goals for ENG 140 and ENG 245 in the Fall 2017 and Spring 2018 semesters after implementing our new objectives.

b. *What specific changes have been or will be made to improve student learning, as a result of using the program assessment results?*
See a.

c. *Date of most recent program review/self-study?*

A departmental review was conducted during the Fall 2016 and Spring 2017 semesters. The English Department completed its self-study and submitted its review to outside evaluators in January, 2017. These reviewers conducted a site visit in April and submitted their own evaluation in May, 2017.

E..Course Assessment Activities: *Is your program able to report any assessment-related activities at the Course-Level… (i.e. created grading rubrics to use in required courses, examined student progress in entry-level courses, developed a new course, etc)? Please briefly explain any assessment projects.*

No, not at this time.

F. Community Engagement Activities in your departmental curriculum:

a. Does your department have a student learning outcome that is related to any community engagement activities?   If so, please state the outcome.

b. Please indicate if any of the community engagement activities listed below are included in your program's curriculum, by noting which activities are required or optional for students in your major.

Community Engagement Activity	*Included*	*Required/Optional*	
Student Research (related to a community-based problem)	X	R	O
Student-Faculty Community Research Project		R	O
Internship, or a Field Experience	X	R	O

Independent Study (community-related project)		R	O
Capstone Course (community-related project)		R	O
Service-Learning (course-based)	X	R	<u>O</u>
Study Abroad, or an International Program	X	R	<u>O</u>
Interdisciplinary Collaborative Project (community related)		R	O
Student Leadership Activities (related to a team project)		R	O
Students/Faculty Community Leadership (advisory boards, committees, conference presentations)		R	O

c. Please list any courses (i.e. EDU 400) that have a community engagement activity in your program.

Entry-level courses: EYE 110 Literature and Medicine
Mid-level courses: ENG 334 Literacy Studies (formerly ENG 230): Students work with a range of community partners.

- *Learning Works After School Programs at Reiche Elementary School and East End Elementary School*
- *English Language Learning (Adult/Family Literacy)*
- *Opportunity Alliance*
- *Parkside Community Center*
- *Portland Adult Education*
- *ESOL informal Conversation Class at USM*
- *Portland High School Mentoring Club*

Upper-level courses:
- *Bangor Daily News*
- Trueline Publishing
- Living on Earth
- *The Free Press*
- MaineBiz
- Maine's Writers' and Publishing Alliance
- *Maine Magazine*
- *The Ballard*
- Switch
- One in Five
- *The Windham Independent*
- *The Portland Phoenix*
- Spectacle Island Consulting (research, document and website creation)
- Alice James Books (editing, writing press releases and advertising copy, coordinating manuscripts, interviews, edition review quotes)
- Mishmash Content Creation (freelance writing and content development)