Learning Outcomes Data
for the Senate Committee on Instructional Program Priorities

Program: English MA—Literature Concentration

Department: English

Number of students enrolled in the program in Fall, 2011:

English, MA, Literature Concentration: 34
English MA, no concentration declared: 38

Faculty member completing template: David Toise, Hellen Lee-Keller
(Date 1/19/12; 1/31/2012)

Period of reference in the template: 2006-07 to present

1. Please describe your program’s learning-outcomes trajectory since 2006-07: Has there been a transformation of organizational culture regarding the establishment of learning outcomes and the capacity to assess progress toward their achievement? If so, during which academic year would you say the transformation became noticeable? What lies ahead; what is the next likely step in developing a learning-outcomes organizational culture within the program?

Our process of transformation first began with the program’s efforts to standardize and make transparent our comprehensive exam, which involved discussion among the faculty as to the purpose and goals of this evaluative tool. These deliberations led to a clear policy document stating the learning outcomes we list below. Once we had clarified exam policy and outcomes, we then realized the need to communicate these goals and criteria to our students: we developed a specific rubric for grading the exam which for the past several years has been distributed both to test-takers and the exam committee. These discussions also helped us to align our introductory methods course with our exam. For students pursuing thesis option (instead of the exam), we then instituted individual contracts between students and committee members. For students writing the thesis, this clarified the process and expectations of our evaluative tools. Finally, we conduct a yearly survey of our graduate students that has lead to curricular reform discussed in more detail below. In the past five years, the concentration in literature (English MA) has made important strides to creating an organizational culture that values learning outcomes and are ability to assess them.
2. Please list in prioritized order (or indicate no prioritization regarding) up to four desired learning outcomes (“takeaways” concerning such elements of curriculum as perspectives, specific content knowledge, skill sets, confidence levels) for students completing the program. For each stated outcome, please provide the reason that it was designated as desired by the faculty associated with the program.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
A. A sophisticated knowledge of a wide range of American, British and World literary works.
B. A familiarity with a variety of literary traditions, periods, and genres
C. An understanding of diverse critical perspectives available in the field of literary studies.
D. An interpretive engagement with the complexities of literary texts as well as a variety of secondary materials.

E. For undergraduate programs only, in what ways are the set of desired learning outcomes described above aligned with the University’s Baccalaureate Learning Goals? Please be as specific as possible.

This document discusses our graduate program and therefore not applicable.

F. For each desired outcome indicated in item 2 above, please:

a) Describe the method(s) by which its ongoing pursuit is monitored and measured.

For Learning Outcomes A-D, our comprehensive specifically addresses American, British, and World literary works in discrete sections. Thesis writers are required to submit a prospectus that shows sophisticated knowledge of their field.

b) Include a description of the sample of students (e.g., random sample of transfer students declaring the major; graduating seniors) from whom data were/will be collected and the frequency and schedule with which the data in question were/will be collected.
For Learning Outcomes A-D, all our students are required to complete a culminating experience (exam or thesis).

The Comprehensive Graduate Exam Committee is a 3-member representative group comprised of one expert in American and in British plus one at-large member. This group is selected on an annual basis and rotates among the Faculty teaching graduate-level courses. Based on the report from the Committee, the Literature Committee discusses the outcomes and performance on the exams each semester.

c) Describe and append a sample (or samples) of the “instrument” (e.g., survey or test), “artifact” (e.g., writing sample and evaluative protocol, performance review sheet), or other device used to assess the status of the learning outcomes desired by the program.

For Learning Outcomes A-D, please see attached materials:
- Comprehensive Exam Grading Rubric
- Sample Exam
- Sample Thesis Prospectus Contract
- Same Thesis Contract
- Sample Exit Survey

d) Explain how the program faculty analyzed and evaluated (will analyze and evaluate) the data to reach conclusions about each desired student learning outcome.

Based on the report from the Committee, the Literature Committee discusses the outcomes and performance on the exams each semester. Based on the Department’s current re-evaluation of the assessment process for the BA, we are currently reviewing and developing policies and procedures for assessing the graduate program. After detailed and extensive discussions and meetings to reflect on student performance, we are developing a formal assessment process.

G. Regarding each outcome and method discussed in items 2 and 4 above, please provide examples of how findings from the learning outcomes process have been utilized to address decisions to revise or maintain elements of the curriculum
Our practice to date has been, and we will continue with our best practices (listed below). After each exam, the Exam Committee reports to the Literature Committee about our students’ writing, critical thinking, and interpretive skills. Based on these reports, our decisions thus far have been to, and will continue to, maintain a diverse and varied curriculum that focuses on practicing interpretive and critical skills and require a sophisticated-level of analytical writing.

Learning Outcome A: Sophisticated/Wide Range of Knowledge
Our program requires students do coursework in both British and American (broadly conceived) literatures for the degree. Thesis writers are required to submit a prospectus that shows sophisticated knowledge of their field. Periodically, the Graduate Coordinator reviews all thesis materials and confers with the Literature Committee about the overall quality of the theses.

Based on our findings, an important recent change that we made is to broaden the American requirement to include Multi-Ethnic Literatures of the US. This allows us to meet more effectively this learning outcome. This change also corresponds to feedback on class-availability mentioned graduate survey.

Learning Outcome B: Variety of Traditions, Periods, Genres
The exam is required to have questions that address a variety of genres, periods, and traditions. In addition to program requirements that stress diversity, the literature program controls the course offerings to ensure a varied curriculum.

Learning Outcome C: Diverse Critical Perspectives
Based on our learning outcomes, our introductory methods courses stresses diverse critical perspectives. The committee attends to diverse critical perspectives in our course offerings on an annual basis. This attention to critical perspectives is also measured by the specific section of the exam that is devoted to critical approaches to literature.

Learning Outcome D: Interpretation and Research
Students who write a thesis are required to submit a bibliography to demonstrate their engagement with a variety of secondary materials. Periodically, the graduate coordinator assesses the bibliographies and exams and confers with the Literature Committee.
H. Has the program systematically sought data from alumni to measure the longer-term effects of accomplishment of the program’s learning outcomes? If so, please describe the approach to this information-gathering and the ways in which the information will be applied to the program’s curriculum. If such activity has not yet occurred, please describe the plan by which it will occur.

[Please limit your response to 300 words or less]

We are currently developing a questionnaire to send to alumni to measure the longer-term effects of accomplishment of the program’s learning outcomes.

I. Does the program pursue learning outcomes identified by an accrediting or other professional discipline-related organization as important? Does the set of outcomes pursued by your program exceed those identified as important by your accrediting or other professional discipline-related organization?

There is no governing body that grants our accreditation.

J. Finally, what additional information would you like to share with the Senate Committee on Instructional Program Priorities regarding the program’s desired learning outcomes and assessment of their accomplishment?

In 2006, we began an earnest effort for consistency and transparency for our graduate students’ experience and learning process. This began with revisions to our Exam Policies, Exam Rubric, Thesis Contracts, and graduate-level Learning Outcomes. The benefits for our students and faculty motivated us to become more purposeful about our practices and policies. We are currently extending and formalizing the ways in which we gather and evaluate evidence regarding our learning outcomes and program goals.
### English MA: Literature Concentration

#### COMPREHENSIVE EXAM GRADING RUBRIC

- **LEARNING OUTCOME A:** A sophisticated knowledge of a wide range of American, British and World literary works.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Demonstrates sophisticated knowledge of a wide range of British texts</td>
<td>Demonstrates adequate knowledge of a wide range of British texts</td>
<td>Demonstrates inadequate knowledge of a wide range of British texts</td>
<td>Demonstrates little knowledge of a wide range of British texts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Demonstrates sophisticated knowledge of a wide range of American texts</th>
<th>Demonstrates adequate knowledge of a wide range of American texts</th>
<th>Demonstrates inadequate knowledge of a wide range of American texts</th>
<th>Demonstrates little knowledge of a wide range of American texts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Demonstrates sophisticated knowledge of a wide range of World texts in translation</td>
<td>Demonstrates adequate knowledge of a wide range of World texts in translation</td>
<td>Demonstrates inadequate knowledge of a wide range of World texts in translation</td>
<td>Demonstrates little knowledge of a wide range of World texts in translation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **LEARNING OUTCOME B:** A familiarity with a variety of literary traditions, periods, and genres

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of a variety of literary traditions</td>
<td>Demonstrates an adequate understanding of a variety of literary traditions</td>
<td>Demonstrates an inadequate understanding of a variety of literary traditions</td>
<td>Demonstrates little understanding of a variety of literary traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of a variety of genres</td>
<td>Demonstrates an adequate understanding of a variety of genres</td>
<td>Demonstrates an inadequate understanding of a variety of genres</td>
<td>Demonstrates little understanding of a variety of genres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of a variety of literary periods</td>
<td>Demonstrates an adequate understanding of a variety of literary periods</td>
<td>Demonstrates an inadequate understanding of a variety of literary periods</td>
<td>Demonstrates little understanding of a variety of literary periods</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**LEARNING OUTCOME C:** An understanding of diverse critical perspectives available in the field of literary studies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of diverse critical perspectives</td>
<td>Demonstrates an adequate understanding of diverse critical perspectives</td>
<td>Demonstrates an inadequate understanding of diverse critical perspectives</td>
<td>Demonstrates little understanding of diverse critical perspectives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**LEARNING OUTCOME D:** An interpretive engagement with the complexities of literary texts as well as a variety of secondary materials.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates a sophisticated interpretive engagement with the complexities of literary texts</td>
<td>Demonstrates an adequate interpretive engagement with the complexities of literary texts</td>
<td>Demonstrates an inadequate interpretive engagement with the complexities of literary texts</td>
<td>Demonstrates little interpretive engagement with the complexities of literary texts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates a sophisticated interpretive engagement with the complexities of secondary materials</td>
<td>Demonstrates an adequate interpretive engagement with the complexities of secondary materials</td>
<td>Demonstrates an inadequate interpretive engagement with the complexities of secondary materials</td>
<td>Demonstrates little interpretive engagement with the complexities of secondary materials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
California State University, Sacramento
Department of English
Graduate Student Exit Survey

Please help us evaluate the effectiveness of our graduate program by answering the following questions. **All students** should respond to sections A & E; **literature students** to B; **creative writing students** to C; and **composition students** to D. **Students earning a composition certificate** should also respond to the questions in section C as well.

A. **PROGRAMMATIC ISSUES (All students respond.)**

1. Your expectation of employment after graduating falls most likely into which of the following areas:
   a. teaching
   b. publishing
   c. business
   d. government
   e. doctoral program
   f. other _____________

2. The overall quality of instruction provided by English faculty.
   a. very satisfied
   b. satisfied
   c. neutral
   d. dissatisfied
   e. very dissatisfied
   f. not applicable

3. The improvement in your writing skills.
   a. very satisfied
   b. satisfied
   c. neutral
   d. dissatisfied
   e. very dissatisfied
   f. not applicable

3. Satisfaction with the class schedules, i.e., rotations of courses and days and times.
   a. very satisfied
   b. satisfied
   c. neutral
   d. dissatisfied
   e. very dissatisfied
4. Your experience with academic advising in the major in this department.
   a. very satisfied
   b. satisfied
   c. neutral
   d. dissatisfied
   e. very dissatisfied
   f. not applicable

5. Availability of fieldwork and internships in this department.
   a. very satisfied
   b. satisfied
   c. neutral
   d. dissatisfied
   e. very dissatisfied
   f. not applicable

6. Inclusion of computer technology in courses.
   a. very satisfied
   b. satisfied
   c. neutral
   d. dissatisfied
   e. very dissatisfied
   f. not applicable

7. Library holdings in the CSUS library.
   a. very satisfied
   b. satisfied
   c. neutral
   d. dissatisfied
   e. very dissatisfied
   f. not applicable

8. Availability of career planning.
   a. very satisfied
   b. satisfied
   c. neutral
   d. dissatisfied
   e. very dissatisfied
9. Opportunity for students to evaluate faculty.

a. very satisfied
b. satisfied
c. neutral
d. dissatisfied
e. very dissatisfied
f. not applicable

10. Rate the facilities in Calaveras Hall and Douglass Hall (1=unsatisfactory - 4=excellent)

a. adequacy of the facilities for learning (i.e. space, heat, AC, etc.)
   1  2  3  4
b. cleanliness of the buildings
   1  2  3  4
c. conduciveness of the facility to learning (i.e. AV equipment, etc)
   1  2  3  4
d. adequacy of office equipment (i.e. Xerox, fax, phones)
   1  2  3  4
e. availability of office staff for assistance
   1  2  3  4

11. How well did the curriculum in your program, field or concentration provide you with practical skills needed in that field of study?

a. exceptionally well.
b. more than adequately
c. less than adequately
d. very poorly
e. not at all
f. don't know/not applicable

12. How well did the curriculum in your program, field or concentration provide you with communication skills needed in that field of study?

a. exceptionally well.
b. more than adequately
c. less than adequately
d. very poorly
e. not at all
f. don't know/not applicable

13. How well did the curriculum in your program, field or concentration provide you with research skills needed in that field of study?

a. exceptionally well.
b. more than adequately
   c. less than adequately
   d. very poorly
   e. not at all
   f. don't know/not applicable

14. Rate your level of satisfaction with program in terms of personal enrichment.

   a. exceptionally well.
   b. more than adequately
   c. less than adequately
   d. very poorly
   e. not at all
   f. don't know/not applicable

15. Rate your level of satisfaction with the culminating experience and circle which of these you completed:
   I. Thesis   II. Comprehensive Exam   III. Creative Project.

   a. exceptionally well.
   b. more than adequately
   c. less than adequately
   d. very poorly
   e. not at all
   f. don't know/not applicable

B. LITERATURE EMPHASIS (Literature students only respond.)

16. Your understanding of one or more literary genres (fiction, poetry, drama).

   a. very satisfied
   b. satisfied
   c. neutral
   d. dissatisfied
   e. very dissatisfied
   f. not applicable

17. Your exposure to diversity (i.e. ethnicity, gender, culture, sexual orientation) in writers.

   a. very satisfied
   b. satisfied
   c. neutral
   d. dissatisfied
   e. very dissatisfied
   f. not applicable
18. Your improvement in literary analysis.
   a. very satisfied
   b. satisfied
   c. neutral
   d. dissatisfied
   e. very dissatisfied
   f. not applicable

19. Your understanding of literary (historical) periods.
   a. very satisfied
   b. satisfied
   c. neutral
   d. dissatisfied
   e. very dissatisfied
   f. not applicable

20. Your understanding of critical theory.
   a. very satisfied
   b. satisfied
   c. neutral
   d. dissatisfied
   e. very dissatisfied
   f. not applicable

21. Your continuing appreciation of literature and arts.
   a. very satisfied
   b. satisfied
   c. neutral
   d. dissatisfied
   e. very dissatisfied
   f. not applicable

22. Your experience with academic advising in the major in this department.
   a. very satisfied
   b. satisfied
   c. neutral
   d. dissatisfied
   e. very dissatisfied
   f. not applicable
23. Post-MA advising about doctoral programs.

   a. very satisfied  
   b. satisfied       
   c. neutral         
   d. dissatisfied    
   e. very dissatisfied  
   f. not applicable  

C. CREATIVE WRITING EMPHASIS (Creative Writing students only respond.)

24. Your increased enjoyment of and understanding of the craft of writing creatively  

   a. very satisfied  
   b. satisfied       
   c. neutral         
   d. dissatisfied    
   e. very dissatisfied  
   f. not applicable  

25 Your increased awareness of a range of creative writing styles and models

   a. very satisfied  
   b. satisfied       
   c. neutral         
   d. dissatisfied    
   e. very dissatisfied  
   f. not applicable  

26 Your ability to give constructive feedback about other creative writers' projects

   a. very satisfied  
   b. satisfied       
   c. neutral         
   d. dissatisfied    
   e. very dissatisfied  
   f. not applicable
D. COMPOSITION/RHETORIC EMPHASIS (Composition Students only respond.)

27. Are you working towards (a) the Composition Certificate OR (b) towards the MA in English with a focus in Composition/Rhetoric?
   a. Composition Certificate  
   b. MA with a focus in Composition/Rhetoric  

28. How satisfied do you feel about your knowledge of the theory and pedagogy of composition?
   a. very satisfied  
   b. satisfied  
   c. dissatisfied  
   d. very dissatisfied  

29. How satisfied do you feel about your knowledge of rhetorical theory?
   a. very satisfied  
   b. satisfied  
   c. dissatisfied  
   d. very dissatisfied  

30. To what extent do you feel well prepared for a career using rhetoric and composition?
   a. very well prepared  
   b. prepared  
   c. underprepared  
   d. very unprepared  

31. How satisfied do you feel about the electives and the variety of topics for the coursework in this area?
   a. very satisfied  
   b. satisfied  
   c. dissatisfied  
   d. very dissatisfied  

32. If you took the Thesis option, how satisfied do you feel about the support you had in preparing your Prospectus?
   a. very satisfied  
   b. satisfied  
   c. dissatisfied  
   d. very dissatisfied  
   e. not applicable
33. If you took the Thesis option, how satisfied do you feel about the support you had in writing your Thesis?
   a. very satisfied  
   b. satisfied  
   c. dissatisfied  
   d. very dissatisfied  
   e. not applicable

34. As a result of the opportunities for professional experience—such as internships in the Writing Center and Community Colleges, WAC Fellowships, and TAships—how satisfied do you feel about your confidence level in dealing with professional duties?
   a. very satisfied  
   b. satisfied  
   c. dissatisfied  
   d. very dissatisfied

35. What are your plans after graduating?
   a. Teach Composition in a community college  
   b. Teach other subjects in a community college  
   c. Enter a Ph.D. Program in Rhetoric and Composition  
   d. Enter a Ph.D. Program in another field of study (such as Literature)  
   e. Teach in K-12  
   f. Work in the non-profit sector  
   g. Work in the private sector

Please write in your responses to the following questions:

36. What course or experience added most to your program of study, and why?

37. What would you recommend we add to the program of study, and why?

38. Post-MA advising about doctoral programs.
   a. very satisfied  
   b. satisfied  
   c. neutral  
   d. dissatisfied  
   e. very dissatisfied
D. SUBJECTIVE ANALYSIS (All students respond.)

39. What are the English Department graduate program's strengths?

40. What are the English Department graduate program's weaknesses?

41. How might the English Department improve its graduate program?