

Report of the Committee on Assessment of Institutional Effectiveness
Program: English, B.A.
2019

1. Program has an articulated Mission Statement that aligns with the Colleges' mission and Strategic Plan.

MEETS: Program has an articulated mission statement that aligns with the Colleges' mission and the department's first-year writing courses, general education offerings, and courses in the major meet the first three goals of the College's strategic plan. We all benefit when our students write with clarity and precision.

2. Program has stated goals and learning outcomes in support of its mission statement.

MEETS: All three learning objectives are well defined and have clear methodology for assessment. These goals were created to refine the previous seven student learning outcomes.

3. Program uses assessment tools to evaluate the effectiveness of learning outcomes.

MEETS: The English department changed its learning outcomes for the major in 2017 based on its ongoing assessment efforts. Clearly, continuous improvement is the department's goal.

4. Program reflects and if necessary acts on assessment of student learning.

MEETS: The evidence suggest that the department is doing a good job of assessing their results and "closing the loop". The Department is streamlining its assessment approach, involving instructors rating student's artifact for the signature assignment and a program-wide SLO assessment.

5. Program has implemented curricular change to better meet program goals and learning outcomes.

MEETS: The program has added the concentration and minor in Writing, Rhetoric, and Publication (WRP) that was approved in 2017-18 and was implemented in the Fall of 2018. They are in the process of assessing and collecting data for the new SLOs.

6. Program has professionally active and engaged faculty scholars.

MEETS: Most faculty are engaged in publishing in a wide variety of outlets, depending upon their expertise, including academic books and academic journals. In addition, the faculty are active at conferences and as invited speakers. Many faculty also contribute time as editors and reviewers.

7. Program has faculty members who are engaged in service to their Department, School, Campus, Discipline, and/or their community.

MEETS WELL: The English faculty are very active in service on campus, particularly at the College-wide level, with many, if not most, faculty involved in multiple important roles on campus. Only six faculty are noted for their contributions to community service, but many are active in discipline-level service.

8. Program provides opportunities for faculty development in teaching and research.

MEETS: The program strongly supports the development of its faculty through the funding of conference travel, the hosting of two visiting scholars each year, and the new English Department Research and Writing Colloquium. In addition Prof. Warnick organizes a series of workshops designed to support the instructors in the first-year writing program, many of whom are adjunct faculty.

9. Program produces alumni able to launch successful careers, enter graduate programs, or contribute to society.

MEETS: The department reports the success of several recent graduates in gaining relevant employment or admission to graduate programs, although it is not clear what percentage of graduates follow different career paths.

10. Program contributes to broader educational development of students through participation in Gen Ed, QEP, FYE, Honors, Interdisciplinary, etc

MEETS WELL: The program strongly contributes courses to the FYE and learning community programs, as well as teaching the most credit hours of any department in the Honors program. Furthermore, the program has been a large supporter of REACH and SPECTRA programs, and developing distance education courses. The English program should also consider ways to contribute to the current QEP on Sustainability Literacy (or should document these if already occurring).

11. Program provides high impact experiences to students.

MEETS: The program provides many opportunities for students to participate in research through bachelor's essays and independent study at both the undergraduate and the graduate level. A sizable percentage of majors complete independent studies and tutorials in the program, along with a consistent track record of students being supported in summer research programs like SURF grants. Study abroad programs are supported and students are also provided avenues to create and publish works in undergraduate magazines.

12. Program has an effective enrollment strategy.

APPROACHING GOAL: Our assessment here may have to do with the choices of evidence included in the evidence document. The program should be commended for the many activities they have undertaken to engage current students in the program. However, little mention was given to what is being done to attract students to the B. A. program, initially. No goals for undergraduate enrollments are discussed.

13. Program has sufficient resources so as to not be overly reliant on adjunct faculty, and has an articulated process for adjunct evaluation.

APPROACHING GOAL: Although the English program employs a large number of adjuncts, the adjuncts teach primarily in the first-year writing program. This program has a support structure in place that includes ongoing instruction and mentoring, as well as evaluation based on observation. More information could be given on the process of evaluation, especially the use of other sources of information, in addition to the observation. Finally, little mention is given to what is done if an adjunct faculty member is found to be deficient in some area(s).

14. Program attracts diverse students and faculty.

Students: APPROACHING GOAL: Although the percentage of underrepresented minorities in the English program has increased, it isn't clear that it is a product of a concentrated effort of the department to attract minority students. The strategies identified were strategies in place to attract majors, IN GENERAL, not strategies that would necessarily reach underrepresented minority students.

Faculty: APPROACHING GOAL: Over half of the program's 31 faculty are women. However, less than 10% of the faculty are members of underrepresented minority groups. Beyond advertising in The Chronicle of Higher Education and using contacts, few strategies are being used to target and recruit minority faculty.