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## English [BA] [ENGL]

**Cycles included in this report:**

Jun 1, 2024 to May 31, 2025

## Program Name: English [BA] [ENGL]

Reporting Cycle: Jun 1, 2024 to May 31, 2025

### 1 Is this program offered via Distance Learning?

### 2 Is this program offered at an off-site location?

No

### 2.1 If yes to previous, provide addresses for each location where 50% or more of program credits may be earned.

### 3 Example of Program Improvement

2020-2021:

The most significant changes that occurred was the review of the current curriculum and the on-going assessment process of our courses, their structures, and requirements. Due to internal concerns about student performance and abilities in upper-level courses, a departmental curriculum committee was formed. This committee will explore ways to improve the department's course offerings, structures, and requirements in order to address the following concerns (copied from the informal faculty inquiry that prompted this review):

"Someone has posed a question about the undergraduate lit class sequence. This person has noted that some students do not take British, American, and World Lit classes in that order. This means that students in 400-level courses do not enter those courses with a certain degree of aptitude.

These are the questions/comments/concerns that have come up in a string of emails about this topic:

- Is this [taking courses out of sequence] the rule now (or the exception)?
- Are students not required to follow a particular sequence? Why not?
- Is a sequence suggested? Is that enough?
- If the courses have the numbers they do simply for reasons of organization, that's definitely different than thinking of courses as intended for seniors in their last year or two of studies.
- Should course prerequisites include junior or senior standing?
- Many students don't really know how to form a simple argument or write a good thesis. As a result, writing workshops are needed in the senior course to help provide extra support.
- It might be helpful to have some structure in terms of when they take specific classes so that the students at least have some material in common.
- Should sophomore courses for our majors require a rigorous paper? Should each level's courses have more rigorous expectations?
- Some students take ENGL 200 their senior year. That doesn't make any sense. The catalog says this should be taken within the first 60 hours. Could this be even earlier? Graduating student's comment: "...she's basically learning now in 200 and in this senior course what she should have learned years ago."
- It's hard to expect students coming straight from ENGL 102 to suddenly begin analyzing literature. The kind of writing we do in lit classes is more nuanced than what I understand is taught in comp classes. Students jump into ENGL 201—or Shakespeare or World Lit or American Lit—without a common background provided by the department to prepare them for the kind of reading and writing they will have to do. After all, ENGL 101/102 are Gen Ed courses, right? So they're learning what students from across the university and across every kind of discipline are learning. That doesn't seem like enough preparation for their studies in English.
- Perhaps the solution isn't requiring a specific, strict sequence, but maybe offering ENGL 200 or another class (I wouldn't want all the burden to fall on any one specific professor) as a prerequisite to any other lit classes).

2021-2022:

The current curriculum decided the most important change was not a realignment of courses but to modify the rubric of ENGL 200 and intensify the evaluations and raise the expectations at the 410 level. The committee also suggested that the department should emphasize via the department head and faculty meetings.

In conjunction with the EDUC department, the ENFL department also completed a systematic evaluation of the courses offered in the ENGL ED concentration sequence to determine if these courses met the topics of the ENGL content PRAXIS exam. The first step of this process is ensuring that course SLO align with each study topic. Phase two, amending courses or curriculum, will occur in 2022-2023.

2022-2023:

The ENFL Department produced its ten-year program review (Institutional Review & Program Prioritization) this year, providing a good opportunity to reflect on the department's many successes and opportunities for improvement.

COLA and ENFL departmental leadership participated in the "Futures Conference" and disseminated to faculty the several "pillars" for progress established by administration. Despite a general concern among faculty that the "pillars" remain vague and largely unactionable, the department did take to heart the need for increased enrollment, retention, and student engagement. In response, committees for Curriculum, Recruitment (newly established), and Engagement (newly established) proved very active this year.

The ENFL Curriculum Committee met several times over the year. The sequencing of courses continues to remain a keen topic of discussion. Some students are still taking ENGL 200 in their junior or senior years, meaning that they are not yet fully prepared for the level of writing that is expected of upper-level courses (e.g. ENGL 401, 402, or 410). Efforts will be strengthened to resolve this particular matter through advising. While a more fixed sequence in terms of the survey courses would be preferable, the curriculum committee recognizes how several factors render a firmer approach to sequencing and prerequisites impractical at the moment. Some of these factors include (but are not limited to) persistently low university-wide enrollments following the pandemic and hurricane semesters, the small number of tenured or tenure-track faculty, the curricular rigidity of certain concentrations within the major, and the schedules of our students (most of whom work either full- or part-time to make ends meet).

In an effort to address some of the competency issues in upper-level courses, the ENFL Curriculum Committee determined that students in the Education Concentration should be required to take ENGL 200 instead of ENGL 410. Previously, English Education Concentration students were not required to take ENGL 200 as an introduction to the major. The lack of preparedness of these students when it came to upper-level courses with more demanding research requirements (e.g. ENGL 301, 302, 401, 402, and 410) became increasingly apparent over time. Because most other programs at McNeese working in concert with the School of Education recognize the teaching portfolio as a capstone equivalent, the decision was made to exempt English Education Concentration majors from ENGL 410 in order to free up the credit hours to require ENGL 200 instead.

The new ENFL Recruitment Committee was formed to devise new recruitment strategies and stage recruitment events that are specific to the program. This year, the Recruitment Committee sponsored recruitment events in which high school students were bussed into campus, invited to participate in ENFL-related games, given advising on potential career paths for ENFL majors, and given the opportunity to sit in on classes being taught by experienced and engaging ENFL professors.

The new ENFL Engagement Committee was established with its mission to elevate the intellectual and communal experience of current ENFL majors by organizing social and informational events, the hope being that happier and more engaged students will be more likely to complete their degree programs and recommend the major to other prospective students. This year, members of the Engagement Committee worked to host Sigma Tau Delta events, career advising sessions, film discussions, and student readings.

**2023-2024:**

We have developed a retention plan with a focus on engaging Freshman ENFL majors with direct outreach.

Our curriculum committee is investigating a potential web rotation of courses in order to facilitate retaining students who encounter medical and other road blocks to degree completion.

Our recruitment committee and retention committees are continuing to develop strategies and student outreach. Recent efforts in recruitment have been very positive but we don't necessarily have enough data to assess effectiveness yet.

We are beginning to see an influx of education majors in the English 200 class, but at the moment most have been taking it late in their degree trajectory and so we are not yet seeing the long term impact of the shift to 200 from 410 yet. Next year we plan to offer one online section of the course to see if that allows more education majors to enroll without time conflicts.

**2024-2025:**

Offering ENGL 200 online did result in a radical increase in class size (double the class size of most recent semesters); while we cannot offer it online every semester, we will try to have a rotation of an online section every 3-semester to allow for students with less traditional schedules to take the course online.

Concerted efforts have been made to increase recruitment and retention for the department. The recruitment committee has increased its visibility at on-campus recruitment events, and several faculty/instructors have stepped up visits to local/regional high schools. The department chair has conducted outreach to ENFL students who are still being advised in Freshman Advising to let them know about events, advising, available services, etc. Metrics demonstrate about a 66% effective rate at reaching first-year students. Of those declared ENFL majors not retained by McNeese, the majority are lost in the first year before they begin their formal coursework in the department, so reaching out to these students before they begin taking ENFL courses will likely prove key in improving retention in the major.

**4 Program Highlights from the Reporting Year****2020-2021:****Student/Program Highlights:**

- Sigma Tau Delta was somewhat active, national convention cancelled due to COVID.
- Two issues of undergraduate journal published.
- Undergraduate writing club suspended due to COVID
- Two graduates were accepted into Law School. Two graduates earned teaching positions.
- The development of an undergraduate prize for research was implemented. The first two winners were named.

**2021-2022:****Student/Program Highlights:**

- Jamie Young- MSU English Graduate- Teacher of the Year for Calcasieu Parish School Board 2022.
- Sigma Tau Delta active. Five students attended the National Conference, and four delivered papers. One of those students won a prize for the best poetry submission at the national conference.
- One issue of The Arena was also published, with several pieces by our majors. These issues were edited by one of our majors.
- Two graduates, Wendy Maggio and Arianna Kiritsis, are working at a law firm, Baggett-McCall.
- Ranna Hebert has accepted an internship at The American Press.
- Madeline Kraus, grad 2022, accepted into LSU law this year.
- Rachel Pittman, MA, recently presented a paper at a conference.
- Ester Courville edited a manuscript by best-selling author, Lori Wagner.
- The DEPT graduated 15 BA candidates.

## 2022-2023:

- Katelynn Adrian (MA student) presented her paper “Cinderella-esqe: How Multicultural Fairytales Can Benefit Early Education Curriculum” at the 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Graduate Student Symposium at the University of Louisiana-Lafayette.
- Gauri Awasthi (MA/MFA 2021 graduate) was awarded a residency at the Hambridge Center in George.
- Emily Ann Burleigh (BA 2019 graduate) works as a staff writer for the *American Press* and was recently awarded a grant by the Hector San Miguel Memorial Fund of the Community of SWLA for participation in the International Symposium on Online Journalism in Austin, TX.
- Esther Courville (MA student) presented her paper “Abjection and Spanglish: A Gynocentric View of Impure Linguistics” in Cincinnati at the Meeting of the Society for Comparative Literature and Arts at Xavier University.
- Hanna Denton (BA student) won first prize at the International Sigma Tau Delta Convention for her essay “Marie de France’s *Lai of Lanval* as Marian Parable” in the category for critical essays on British literature.
- Hanna Denton (BA student) published her essay “ ‘Are you a man?’: Macbeth and the Fear of the Feminine” in the 2023 *Sigma Tau Delta Review*
- Daniel Fish (Spanish minor) received a Bustillo McCall tuition grant for the fall semester and an additional grant for travel from Cygnet Associates.
- Bethany Fontenot (BA Fall 2022 graduate) employed by Baggett McCall law firm.
- Milli Meiburg (MA 2022 graduate) presented her essay “Evolution of Monstrous Maleficent” at the Northeast Popular Culture Association.
- Milli Meiburg (MA 2022 graduate) had her presentation “Parasitism and Predation Reconfigured: The Lesser as the Empowered Undead in Jewelle Gomez’s *The Gilda Stories*” approved for inclusion in the Vampire Studies Area of the 2023 Popular Culture Association Conference.
- Taylor Mahone (MFA student) presented her paper “The Seventh Day of the Eleventh Month: Feminine Language & the Sublime Self in *The Cry of a Stone*” at the Tenth Annual Symposium on Medieval and Renaissance Studies at Saint Louis University.
- Reese Menafee (MFA student) received the Sundress Academy’s Spring 2023 Fellowship for creative writing, theatre, filmmaking, and visual arts.
- Bob Miller (MFA student) was nominated for “Best of the Net” for his hybrid creative nonfiction poem, “and the quest for the holy grail.”
- Rachel Pittman (MFA 2023 graduate) accepted to a Creative Writing PhD program at Georgia State University.
- Rachel Pittman (MFA 2023 graduate) won the 2022 Moondancer Fellowship from the Writers Colony at Dairy Hollow.
- Gage Saylor’s (MFA 2019 graduate) *Where Were You When It Happened?* Was a semifinalist for the Iron Horse Book Prize.
- Jillie Sexton was shortlisted for the Retreat West Prize in the micro fiction category for her piece “Something Floral.”
- Abbie Skinner (MFA student) edited special edition of the literary journal *Boudin: it Came from the Swamp*.
- Scott Thomason’s (MFA, MA graduate) novel received honorable mention in the Gutsy Great Novelist Chapter One Prize.
- Taryn White (MA student) presented her paper “The Hybrid Catcher in the Liminal Rye” at the 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Graduate Student Symposium at the University of Louisiana-Lafayette.
- ENFL students Katelynn Adrian, Lyndon Carrier, Hanna Denton, Rachel Pittman, and Ben Watson presented research and creative writing at LitCon in Natchitoches (hosted by Northwestern State University).
- ENFL undergraduate students Broc Fontenot, Tori Self, Isabelle Metcalf, Madison Poindexter, Ashley Beard, Chelsey Wright Margaret Brantley, and Lyndon Carrier read fiction and poetry from *The Arena* at a public event sponsored by the McNeese chapter of Sigma Tau Delta.
- Two volumes of *The Arena* (undergraduate literary and visual art journal) published.
- *The McNeese Review* was published with the help of the following MFA students: Taylor Mahone (managing editor), Jillie Sexton (fiction editor), Rachel Pittman (poetry editor), and Reese Menafee (creative nonfiction editor).
- The program graduated 20-22 BA candidates.

## 2023-2024:

- Four students from the Pi Zeta Chapter of Sigma Tau Delta attend the International Convention in St. Louis (Katelynn Adrian, Hanna Denton, Sarah Lognion, and Maelyn Moss). Students chaired sessions, presented essays, and contributed poetry.
- Sarah Lognion (undergraduate) won first prize in the British Literature Category for her paper: "Parallels Between Travel Narratives and *Much Ado About Nothing*." Sarah's win represents the third year in a row that a McNeese student has taken a first place prize.
- Sarah Lognion (undergraduate) published her essay "Opening an Existential Window into *Wuthering Heights*" in the *Butler Journal of Undergraduate Studies*.
- Hanna Denton (undergraduate) received the 2023 Dr. Scott E. Goins Award in Undergraduate Research Excellence for her paper: "Entering the Invisible Palace: Platonism and Neoplatonism in *Metamorphoses* and *Till We Have Faces*."
- Former McNeese graduate, Madison Pitre was awarded Calcasieu Parish Teacher of the Year
- Maegan Gonzales (ENFL Instructor) awarded Athletic Department Faculty MVP.
- Lynn Watson (ENFL Faculty) served as visiting writer at Auburn University Montgomery.
- Keagan LeJeune (ENFL Faculty) published his book *Finding Myself Lost in Louisiana* and participated in numerous readings in the community including the Banner Series at McNeese.
- Lynn Watson (ENFL Faculty) published in *Hobart* and had work accepted in the *Gooseberry Review* and *Gastropoda*.
- Michael Robins (ENFL Faculty) published in the *Bear Review* and *Sprung Formal* as well as having works accepted in *Transom* and the *Heavy Feather Review*.
- Maegan Gonzales (ENFL Instructor) published a poem in the *Common Ground Review*.
- Kevin Kritsch (ENFL Faculty) presented the paper "The Language of Personhood: Abortion and Embryology in the Early Irish Penitentials" at the Sewanne Medieval Colloquium. In May, he will travel to Kalamazoo, Mich., Irish Penitentials" at the Sewanne Medieval Colloquium
- Kevin Kritsch (ENFL Faculty) presented the paper "Embryology, Emsoulment, and a Miraculously Vanishing Pregnancy: The Case of St. Ciarán of Saighir" at the International Conference on Medieval Studies at Western Michigan University.
- Meagan Gonzales (ENFL Instructor) and Michael Robins (ENFL Faculty) participated in the New Orleans Poetry Festival.
- Meilyn Woods (MFA student) presented a talk, "Craft Critique Culture: Black Legacies," at a conference in Cedar Rapids.
- Karris McCollum (MFA student) presented at the Consilience Conference at Dalhousie University.
- Joel Ferdon (MFA alumnus) published his poetry collection, *The Arsonist's Son*
- Chris Lowe (MFA alumnus and former MFA faculty member) published his book *Make Some Wretched Fools to Pay*
- Ladi Opaluwa (MFA alumna) published flash fiction in *Craft*.
- *The McNeese Review* (Vol. 61) was published by the department.
- The online literary journal *Boudin* was published by the department.
- Two volumes of *The Arena* (undergraduate literary and visual art journal) published.

## 2024-2025:

- Three students from the Pi Zeta Chapter of Sigma Tau Delta attend the International Convention in Pittsburgh (Katelynn Adrian, Maelyn Moss, and Adrian Kain Snell). Students presented essays and contributed poetry.
- Mia Bonds (BA, graduated Spring 2024) awarded Outstanding CoLA Student.
- Dr. Keagan Lejeune was awarded the 2024 Summerlee Prize for best nonfiction book devoted to the Gulf Coast for his book *Lost in Louisiana* (2023).
- Michael Robins (MFA faculty) published poetry in *New England Review*, *The Cincinnati Review*, *ONE ART*, *Sixth Finch*, *Southern Indiana Review*, *Ballast*, *Kestrel*, *Pine Hills Review*, *Potcard*, *Sugar House Review*, *Trampoline*.
- Michael Robins (MFA faculty) four or five poems were nominated for the Pushcart Prize, including the poem "Against Yesterday" published in *Bear Review*.

- Maegan Gonzales (ENFL instructor) was named a featured poet by Imnl arts at The Domino in New Orleans and was a featured visual artist at Brazen Boutique in downtown Lake Charles.
- Maegan Gonzales (ENFL instructor) published two poems in *SWWIM* and *Sundog Lit*. Additionally, she has two poems forthcoming in *Sprung Formal*.
- Lynn Watson (MFA faculty) published works of fiction in *OPEN: Journal of Arts & Letters*, *Gargoyles*, *Gooseberry Review*, *Gastropoda*, *Hobart*, *The Doctor T.J. Eckleburg Review*, and *Moon City Review*. Dr. Watson also had several works of fiction accepted for publication in *The Works of Amy Sherman-Pallidino*, *Bloomsbury's Screen Storytelling*, *Midway Journal*, and *Sugar Sugar Salt*.
- Lynn Watson (MFA faculty) was accepted to attend the Writing Workshop Paris, a competitive writing retreat in Paris, France, for summer 2025.
- Lynn Watson (MFA faculty) established an MFA Summer Retreat in which five McNeese students will travel to Alabama in June 2025.
- Lynn Watson's (MFA faculty) story "Aeroplane Zoo Cafe" was nominated for the Wigleaf Longlist.
- Barbara Wyman (ENFL faculty) presented a portion of a book chapter, "Creating Malevolence: Demons in the Dream of Gerontius," at the annual St. John Henry Newman Association conference at the Univ. of Dallas.
- Michael Robins (MFA faculty) gave a reading at the University of Southern Mississippi on Oct. 19.
- Megan Poole (English BA, graduated 2014) is teaching at University of Texas (Austin) and has a book forthcoming with University of Chicago Press, *Listening to Beauty*.
- Hanna Denton (English BA, graduated 2024) was awarded the Patricia and William Stacy Endowed Fellowship from the Department of English at the Univ. of Kentucky.
- Hanna Denton (English BA, graduated 2024) presented her capstone essay for McNeese at the 52nd Annual Louisville Conference on Literature and Culture.
- Shannon Wolfe (MFA graduate) published a work of flash fiction in *Heavy Weather Review*.
- Matthew Moniz (MFA, graduated 2020) published a poem in *The American Literary Review*. He has received the Sea's Kim Bridgford Memorial Sonnet Crown Contest Prize and the SCMLA Poetry Prize.
- Tyler Robert Sheldon (MFA graduate) published three poems in *The Gasconade Review Presents: No One Sees the Irony* and another poem in *Dialogue Journal*.
- Taylor Mahone (MFA graduate) published a story in *The Collidescope*.
- Reese Menafee (MFA graduate) published a poem in *The Sun*.
- Lyndon Carrier (English BA, graduated 2023) published work in *The Houghly Review*.
- Aiman Tariq (MFA graduate student) presented at Louisiana Gateway English and Math Symposium at Delgado Community College in New Orleans.
- Karris McCollum (MFA graduate student) presented her essay "Examining Hyperreality in Will Wright's *The Sims*" at the Popular Culture Association's conference.
- Ben Watson (MFA graduate student) presented his essay "Resurrecting the Dead Author: Exploring Process-Based Approaches to Creative Pedagogy to Provide Better Mentorship for Writers" at the Louisville Conference on Literature and Culture.
- Michael Robins (faculty), Kevin Thomason (faculty), and Maegan Gonzales participated in the "Take 5 Poetry Reading" at Historic City Hall.
- Numerous graduate students and faculty attended AWP in Los Angeles.
- *The McNeese Review* (Vol. 62) was published by the department.
- The online literary journal *Boudin* was published by the department.
- *The Arena* Vol. 56, ENFL departmental journal for undergraduate fiction and poetry, was published.

## 5 Program Mission

The basic purpose of the Bachelor of Arts in English is to train students to understand and communicate in the English language. English courses give the training necessary for effective writing and correct speaking, acquaint students with the history of the English language and literature, encourage critical thinking, develop a perceptive approach to literature, and help examine human values that will enrich the intellectual life of individuals. Courses within the major, as well as electives and required courses outside the major, connect students with the world cultural heritage.

## 6 Institutional Mission Reference

The Bachelor of Arts in English program supports McNeese State University's fundamental mission to provide successful education of the undergraduate students and services to the employers and communities in its region.

## 7 Assessment and Benchmark ENGL 200, 301/302, and 410 Writing Samples

Assessment: Rubric-based evaluation of writing samples from ENGL 200; ENGL 301 and/or ENGL 302; and ENGL 410.

Benchmarks:

- 60% of students in ENGL 200 will earn an overall average score of 3 (Developing Proficiency/Acceptable) on the rubric.
- 60% of students in ENGL 301 and/or ENGL 302 will earn an overall average score of 4 (Fully Proficient) on the rubric.
- 60% of students in ENGL 410 will earn an overall average score of 5 (Exceeds Expectations) on the rubric.

Prior to 2022-2023, the benchmark was 70% of English majors will score at least 60% on the embedded questions in ENGL 201-202, 301-302, 401-402.

*Files:*

Embedded questions ENFL

F17 301 revised Embedded Questions

S18 302 revised Embedded questions-1

## 7.1 Data

### ENGL 200:

Academic Year	Students that earned overall average score of 3	
	#	%
2020-2021	—	—
2021-2022	3/6	50%
2022-2023	6/6	100%
2023-2024	13/13	100%
2024-2025	16/17	94%

### ENGL 301 and/or ENGL 302:

Academic Year	Students that earned overall average score of 4	
	#	%
2020-2021	—	—
2021-2022	5/6	83%
2022-2023	5/6	83%
2023-2024	6/6	100%
2024-2025	8/12 in 302 7/11 in 301	67% 63%

### ENGL 410:

Academic Year	Students that earned overall average score of 5	
	#	%
2020-2021	—	—
2021-2022	5/6	83%
2022-2023	6/6	100%
2023-2024	5/6	83%
2024-2025	9/10	90%

#### 7.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2020-2021:

Hurricanes prevented the collection of samples and rubrics in the fall. Samples were collected and scored using the rubric during the spring. The rubric showed that student critical thinking was strong but students needed practice at constructing arguments and writing. For this reason, data is not recorded. The 2020-2021 curriculum committee was formed and charged with their task partly in response to this interpretation of the data. The department also decided that collecting samples from an initial (ENGL 200), median (ENGL or FORL 301/302) and terminal course (ENGL 410) was a more streamlined approach to assessment. These have been collected and scored.

2021-2022:

Samples were collected and scored for Fall 2021 and Spring 2022. The scores are strong. Rubrics show solid scores on critical thinking.

The department decided that the median assessment point could be ENGL 301/302 as all majors take these courses. It also decided that a different or additional assessment point may be needed for those students with a concentration in FORL or since these students take ENGL 301/302 as well, that may serve. Next year we will use past performance to decide on benchmarks and begin data collection.

2022-2023:

**Note from IRE: This assessment was formally changed from embedded questions to a rubric-based evaluation of writing samples just prior to the 2022-2023 report being completed. While the department has provided data for this assessment from previous academic years, the published 2021-2022 report does not include this assessment or these data.**

Samples were collected and scored for Fall 2022 and Spring 2023. With the help of IRE, this assessment has become formalized. It was the department's error to move forward with a new assessment without the proper planning and institutional collaboration. Scores in the rubric are strong, which may mean that benchmarks could be reassessed. The department will use the 2023-2024 materials to assess the benchmark or if material in the rubric should change.

While the department understands its error in changing assessment, scores on the rubrics have been used to reflect upon curriculum and programmatic change, and the change should offer more insight than embedded questions. The most significant change implemented this year based on these assessment was the change in curriculum for ENGL ED concentration, which swapped ENGL 410 for ENGL 200. The reasoning was that while the ENGL ED curriculum had a capstone experience via student teaching, it did not have a robust initial assessment for majors, which is ENGL 200's function for other ENGL concentrations.

2023-2024:

As English 200 moves out of the last QEP in terms of assessment, it may change some aspects of the course; however, it is becoming part of our departmental retention plan as many ENFL majors enter the University without needing to take English 101 and 102--thus 200 would be the first class those students are anticipated to take within the major. The class will strategize to better serve and engage entering college students as much as sophomore level ENFL majors.

English 301/302:

Students met the benchmark. Keep benchmark as it is. Department should focus on improving ancillary courses

English 410:

See sections 9 and 10 below. With 80% of ENGL 410 students meeting the benchmark for portfolio scholarship and 90% meeting the benchmark for writing skills, the benchmark is being met. Benchmark should remain the same.

2024-2025:

English 200: The final assignment constitutes 3 parts (Abstract Submission to a Call for Papers, Conference Presentation, Final Written Project). When all 3 portions are combined together 16/17 scored 70% or higher. The one student who received a combined score below 70% turned in part of the assignment over 3 weeks late and was missing a critical portion of a different part of the assignment.

English 301/302:

English 410: Since the change in requirements for those pursuing an English Education Concentration (required to take ENGL 200 as opposed to ENGL 410 and having their student teaching fulfill the capstone experience), there has understandably been a downturn in the numbers of ENGL 410 participants. The lower enrollment does tend to skew the results somewhat with a single weak student each semester serving to lower the overall average more than would be the case with higher enrollments. That said, those students completing the capstone portfolio with "good" or better marks are doing so with comparatively higher overall scores. Hence, this year has marked a widening gap between the stronger students performing better and the few weaker students remaining stagnant. Of the capstone projects that were found to merely "meet the standard with reservations," at least one of them contained portions of the portfolio that were written well but found somewhat wanting in research and scholarship, thereby explaining the 90% writing and overall ratings alongside the 80% research paper and scholarship ratings.

*Files:*

2019 McNeese assessment rubric

## 8 Assessment and Benchmark ENGL 200 and 410 Portfolio Research Paper

Assessment: Portfolio research paper.

Benchmark: 80% of majors will receive a rating of good or better on the portfolio research paper.

*Files:*

ENGL 200 Essay Rubric

### 8.1 Data

Academic Year	Majors that received a rating of good or better on the 200 Portfolio research paper	
	#	%
2020-2021	14/16	88%
2021-2022	17/22	77%
2022-2023	8/11	73%
2023-2024	11/13	85%
2024-2025	16/17	90%

Academic Year	Majors that received a rating of good or better on the 410 Portfolio research paper	
	#	%
2020-2021	15/17	88%
2021-2022	14/17	82%
2022-2023	13/15	87%
2023-2024	9/10	90%
2024-2025	8/10	80%

*Files:*

ENGL 200 Sample - Dancing

ENGL 200 sample-universe

### 8.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2020-2021:

Data suggests majors are achieving this outcome at a high rate. ENGL 200 has shifted some of its assignments to confront deficiencies. The curriculum committee will review other means of emphasizing the correct sequencing of ENGL 200 in student degree plans. The revised 410 rubric is offering more specific data. In part, this data is being used to direct the curriculum committee's charge. The curriculum committee will use this info. to make recommendations.

2021-2022:

Reflection about ENGL 200 from instructor:

Fall 2021: 10/14, 71%: (as a note on the Fall data; when considering the full 3-part project pieces together as a whole, the figures go up to 12/14 or 86%)

Spring 2022: 7/8, 88% (goes up to 8/8 when considering all 3-parts of the project together)

About the artifact being assessed--it is part 2 of a 3 part assignment. Here is info on the parts:

- Part 1: respond to a conference CFP by writing and submitting an abstract (extensive feedback given in response)
- Part 2: write a conference paper based on the abstract submitted (the artifact assessed here)
- Part 3: a conference presentation of the paper content (takes place during the final exam time and is based on the content of Part 2)

From instructor assessment on the QEP from this semester:

- On part 2 specifically: many students in this course test out of English 101 and 102 and this is extremely detrimental to them on this assignment. Throughout the semester we review writing conventions related to the course content (literature), citation and source evaluation (MLA), and I give feedback related to composition and rhetoric style issues especially when responding to the abstracts submitted in Part 1. I also provide optional handouts on some 101/102 level issues when assigning Part 2. Even so, so many of the students, having tested out of Freshman English, haven't yet made the shift from high school level writing to college level writing.
- On the whole project: students did unusually well with their presentations this semester (at least far better than the past couple semesters) and this raised the overall project scores significantly. The presentation of the material to an audience is weighted the same as writing the paper when the three parts of the project are combined.
- This semester we began with an inordinate number of non-majors in the class (an intro-to-the-major class); most of those students who stayed in the class despite it being addressed several times the first couple weeks of classes didn't attend regularly (or hardly at all) and didn't turn in any parts of the project (or most of the other assignments throughout the semester).

Additional commentary: all the students who turned in the piece being assessed this semester were students who had attended somewhat regularly and so the data is rather high.

From my QEP form last semester:

Students not meeting the benchmark turned in work that did not fulfill the assignment given (and in at least one case had no relationship to the assignment given and would not have met the basic standards in a 101 class on any topic. In my shock at the work turned in, I researched and found the student did not meet the minimum criteria for taking the course--including having not completed English 102 or earned credit for it by other means--and I'm unsure how the student, who also rarely attended class, was able to register for it.) Late work (abstracts turned in over a month late, including one turned in on the day of the final exam) had a significant impact on a couple of the scores, lowering the overall average.

Further commentary on the last semester one: since responding to the abstract is where I give the most extensive feedback toward the project development--as well as to any writing related issues that are 101/102 level issues--students who turned in late abstracts did not benefit from any of that as they were basically turning in the abstract at the same time the paper was nearly due.

Reflection about ENGL 410 from instructor: We continue to meet our benchmark. We have had some wonderful cohorts of majors arriving at the capstone with quality skills and producing great work. Student feedback has praised the course's ability to help them learn research methodologies and engage with a rigorous revision process that, in turn, further improves the polish of their writing. The few students who have not performed up to the benchmark standards are those who have struggled with time management, submitting drafts late and not fully engaging in the revision process. In the future, I am considering further refining the "theme" of the capstone course in order to accelerate the time spent deciding on a topic, thereby leaving more time for draft and project development. Furthermore, I will likely increase the point/grade value for draft submissions to further encourage participation in the revision process.

2022-2023:

Reflection about ENGL 200 from instructor of record: Although all of the students met the benchmark in spring, a couple were particularly weak. Use of sources, types of sources, and types/use of analysis were the most problematic factors and some elements of the course will be revised to emphasize analysis/writing strategies more heavily at the start of the semester in the future. Some assignments may also be added or shifted to focus more directly on sources and citation--these elements should be learned in 101/102 but a great number of students in this particular course test out of those foundational classes. While these elements are taught, they are taught in the context of how-to-write-about-literature using the professional handbook for our field and it may be beneficial to remove them into a context where just the source /citation elements are being focused on separately. Concern for these issues became apparent before the final paper and there were changes to the assignment document to reflect these concerns; however, some changes may be added to the course from the beginning in the fall to focus on writing elements differently. On the other hand, the conference posters for the poster presentations this semester were definitely the most overall successful batch. In the past, there was some unevenness with people focusing only on image and not including enough information and vice versa. This time, every poster was perfectly balanced in these elements.

Reflection about 410 from instructor of record: The research work being produced in the 410 capstone course continues to demonstrate the high quality and competency demanded by the program. In several instances, students have continued to revise and revisit their 410 capstone projects, presenting them with great success at both undergraduate and graduate student conferences. Each semester witnesses one or two students who struggle with the project. In most cases, those who struggle with the course also deal with time management issues. The instructor has already increased the credit awarded for drafts and revisions in an effort to encourage better time management and completion of the project in incremental stages. To a large extent, this has helped to increase the success ratio, though severe cases have required increased personal intervention on the part of the instructor. Student feedback notes how the rigorous revision process has helped them to improve their writing, organization, and communication skills. Due in part to the level of preparedness of students entering the course, the further development of clarity and precision in written communication has taken precedence in recent semesters, occasionally meaning that projects present good “close readings” and analysis of primary texts, but with less emphasis on secondary literature and the research element. Several factors may aid in raising preparedness and elevating the research component of projects. As discussed in other sections of this assessment, there will be increased emphasis on advising in hopes that students will take courses in the appropriate sequence. Students who have completed ENGL 200, 351, and 361 prior to enrollment in 410 tend to demonstrate better language skills and familiarity with research expectations. Through an increased adherence to sequencing, the hope is that students in 410 can concentrate more on their research than the mechanics of writing. Furthermore, students will be further encouraged to build upon work and ideas they have explored in other classes prior to 410. Often students find themselves embarking on new topics of research which requires more time to get the project up and running. It is the desire of the instructor that students should view 410 as a continuation and culmination of the work they have already conducted while at McNeese. Should students work on topics they are already familiar with, the quality of the research component and the complexity of argumentation should increase.

2023-2024:

English 200: There were only two students who did not meet the benchmark this year; both were students who very rarely came to class and did not keep up well with assignments or ask questions related to assignment instructions. Students who attended regularly and participated regularly all met the benchmark.

English 410: See sections 9.1.1 and 10.1.1.

2024-2025:

English 200: See section 7.1.1.

English 410: See sections 9.1.1 and 10.1.1.

## **9 Assessment and Benchmark ENGL 410 Portfolio Scholarship**

Assessment: Rating on scholarship section of portfolio.

Benchmark: 80% of majors will score good or higher on the scholarship section of the portfolio, demonstrating achievement in reading, analysis, and critical interpretation.

*Files:*

senior evaluation

## 9.1 Data

Academic Year	Majors that received a rating of good or better for their scholarship on the Portfolio Evaluation	
	#	%
2020-2021	13/17	76%
2021-2022	16/17	94%
2022-2023	13/15	87%
2023-2024	8/10	80%
2024-2025	8/10	80%

### 9.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2020-2021:

Data suggests majors struggle with scholarship in regards to conducting deep research and providing critical content. COVID and the hurricanes prevented the mock conference from occurring. The curriculum committee is endeavoring to address this data.

2021-2022:

The percentage of majors receiving an evaluation of good or better for their scholarship has demonstrated improvement. Much of this can be attributed to the quality of the individual students and their preparation in other ENFL courses. I would posit that some of the improvement this year also has to do with the choice to theme the course around “adaptation,” a decision which has helped guide the projects toward consistent methodologies defined by critical comparison, adaptation theory, and well-researched contextualization of the originary and adapted texts within their respective historical, social, intellectual, and artistic milieus. In the previous couple of semesters, students were given even more flexibility in deciding their topic which resulted in several of them “spinning their wheels” too far into the semester. While the theme allows for a high degree of latitude for students to choose topics that interest them, it also provides much needed direction and guard rails. Perhaps, going forward, the theme of the course could be further refined such that students settle upon their chosen project a bit earlier in the semester, permitting them more time to delve into the research aspect and incorporate said research into additional drafts.

2022-2023:

The percentage of majors receiving an evaluation of good or better for their scholarship continues to meet and surpass the benchmark. There has been a dip in the percentage of students receiving a good or better rating compared to previous semesters. There are several factors that may account for this slight decrease: 1) small sample size in terms of 15 completers; 2) increased standards and expectations on the part of instructors; 3) English Ed. Concentration students did not have the benefit of ENGL 200 prior to taking ENGL 410; 4) a more flexible approach to topic selection was taken in order to accommodate previous student feedback desiring greater freedom in developing a topic. In order to improve the quality of data, there has been discussion of a revised rubric which will allow capstone committee members to assess research on a more detailed scale, thereby allowing for more nuance and precision when rating student work. The curriculum committee will discuss revisions to the rubric in the coming Fall semester. Data from this year shows a desire for greater adherence to form and formatting with respect to research and citations. Additional drafts of citations and works cited lists will be required in the future.

2023-2024:

The percentage of majors receiving an evaluation of good or better for their scholarship continues to meet and/or surpass the benchmark. The decreasing number of majors means that the data is somewhat skewed. Whereas this academic year has witnessed some of the strongest English majors to graduate in recent years (several of whom have been accepted to nationally renowned graduate programs for English), the presence of one or two students who struggle with academics more broadly (not just English) and a work/school/life balance means that the numbers read somewhat lower than normal. The overall numbers for ENGL 410 completers are also somewhat lower due to the fact that the requirements for the English Education Concentration have changed to require ENGL 200 instead of ENGL 410; hence, fewer majors take ENGL 410. In general, the changes in requirements demonstrate positive results from the perspective of ENGL 410. Students seemed better prepared for the capstone project and are increasingly content oriented. Also, lower numbers mean that more attention from the instructor can be dedicated to the needs of individual students and their projects. Moving forward, the instructor will require students to engage with more traditional literature and language topics in order to better the "research" numbers. In an effort to enhance student engagement, the instructor has permitted a great deal of latitude in terms of project topics involving pop culture, film, television, and less traditionally "literary" topic. While students have demonstrated a vested interest in their topics, on some rare occasions (only a couple of cases), the methodology and rigor of the "research element" has suffered. Hopefully, reorienting the capstone projects towards more traditional topics and methodologies will improve upon an already good success rate when it comes to evaluations of the research elements.

2024-2025:

With very few exceptions, the ENGL 410 students are demonstrating good analytical skills and an ability to provide close readings of primary texts. Where there is sometimes a weakness is in the ability to incorporate secondary scholarship and produce a convincing "research element" in the final project. Research methods along with instruction about identifying and evaluating secondary sources has been and will remain a key emphasis in the course's instruction. The couple of students who have failed to meet the standards with respect to research tend to do so due to poor time management skills and an inability to fully engage with the draft and revision process. Despite numerous (five or six) deadlines for drafts and revisions, the students who are found wanting in terms of research and an ability to cite sources are inevitably those who fail to turn in drafts, ignore instructor feedback, and submit work late or not at all. The instructor will make a concerted effort to offer guidance on time management in addition to the instruction already provided about research methods and tools. While the revision process does account for a good percentage of the final grade, thought will be given to increasing the weight of grades for drafts and revisions. Another problem that is becoming increasingly apparent is the overall mental health of students. More students appear to be suffering from clinical depression, which, in turn, has a negative impact on time management. The instructor will place more emphasis on maintaining mental health and the availability of mental health services on campus.

## **10 Assessment and Benchmark** ENGL 410 Portfolio Writing Skills

Assessment: Rating on writing skills section of portfolio.

Benchmark: 80% of majors will receive a rating of good or better for their writing skills on Portfolio Evaluations.

*Files:*

senior evaluation

## 10.1 Data

Academic Year	Majors that received a rating of good or better for their writing skills on the Portfolio Evaluation	
	#	%
2020-2021	15/17	88%
2021-2022	16/17	94%
2022-2023	12/15	80%
2023-2024	9/10	90%
2024-2025	9/10	90%

*Files:*

ENGL 410 Sample - Rumi

### 10.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2020-2021:

Data suggests majors are achieving this outcome at a moderately high rate. Writing and critical thinking seem to be the skills suffering the most due to the lack on intense face-to-face contact hours. The revised 410 rubric is offering more specific data to determine the exact issues. All students, even those scoring good in this category, produced papers that lacked in some aspect of writing. This data is being used to direct the curriculum committee's charge and that committee will not only use this data to make recommendations to the curriculum and instruction but will also access the artifact samples to make recommendations.

2021-2022:

The percentage of majors receiving an evaluation of good or better for their written language skills continues to exceed the benchmark. Part of this success can likely be attributed to the self-selecting nature of English and Foreign Language majors who have demonstrated a life-long love of literature and command of language skills. Most of the students score well because they are indeed good writers. That said, there are some students whose writing could stand real improvement and who might still be scoring at least a "good" on the rubric. Perhaps, a more accurate assessment could be achieved by altering the rubric from a five-point scale in which 3 is scored as "good" to a ten-point scale in which a student must score a 7 in order to achieve a "good" rating. A ten-point system may prove more familiar to instructors used to thinking in terms of a letter-grade scale (e.g., A (90-100%), B (80-89%), and C (70-79%)) and provide the opportunity for more accurate and nuanced assessment. With the current rubric, I could imagine a situation in which instructors would view a three out of five (currently "good") as punitive for a student who struggles with writing, but still performs above the 50% mark.

2022-2023:

The percentage of majors receiving an evaluation of good or better for their language and writing skills continues to meet the benchmark. There has been a dip in the percentage of students receiving a good or better rating compared to previous semesters. This can be explained largely by the small sample size. Several students demonstrated poor time management skills and failed to submit drafts in a timely fashion, meaning that they did not fully participate in the revision process. The point value for draft submissions was raised this year to help incentivize participation in the revision process, though additional measures may be considered. A further complication persists in that students are not always taking courses in the recommended sequence. For instance, several students had not taken ENGL 351 ("Advanced Grammar") or ENGL 361 ("Advanced Composition") prior to enrolling in ENGL 410. Either of these courses would have proved useful in preparing the students for the advanced level of writing that is expected in a capstone research course. The curriculum committee should revisit the prerequisites for ENGL 410. While certain courses may be taken out of the recommended sequence, it may be worth considering that ENGL 200, 351 and/or 361 become more firmly established as prerequisites.

**2023-2024:**

The percentage of majors receiving an evaluation of good or better for their language and writing skills continues to meet the benchmark and surpass the benchmark. Indeed, this year's numbers show an improvement to 90% of students completing the capstone course as demonstrating good or better language skills. Even the one student whose language skills were judged to be on the cusp of good demonstrated substantial improvement over time at McNeese, even earning the praise of instructors in the capstone evaluations. This overall improvement is likely due to smaller class sizes and increased attention from instructors. Students appear better prepared for the capstone in terms of their writing skills. It is possible that such improvement is indicative of stronger advising and a more strict adherence to the sequencing of courses discussed in the comments for the previous academic year. Increased point values for drafts and revisions has also incentivized students to invest more in the "process" of writing, thereby yielding better language and writing results. The rubric for evaluations was changed in the Spring 2024 semester from a 5-point scale to a 10-point (more grade-like) scale, allowing for more accurate and nuanced assessment.

**2024-2025:**

The percentage of majors receiving an evaluation of good or better for their language and writing skills continues to meet and/or surpass the benchmark. On the whole, McNeese English majors write and communicate effectively. Those who struggle initially manage to improve drastically during their tenure at McNeese. As in the past, this is largely due to the small class sizes and personal guidance given by instructors at all stages of the curriculum. Many of the students who struggle with the research element still receive "Superlative (10)," "Excellent (9)," or "Very Good (8)" ratings for their writing ability. The few students who received only "Good (7)" or "Meets Standard with Reservations (6)" are those that fail to engage fully in the revision process, neglecting to turn in drafts and address comments made by the instructor(s). Point values for drafts and revisions were increased this academic year with only marginal success. Further increases in point values for such exercises may be considered. In the end, issues such as time management, general studiousness, and mental health tend to correlate highly when comparing outcomes and scores for "writing." See comments in Section 9.1.1 for further thoughts on these matters.