



English [MA] [ENGL]

Cycles included in this report:

Jun 1, 2024 to May 31, 2025

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Program Name: English [MA] [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 director and the department chair have been setting up processes to identify successful undergraduates with a focus in English in their junior year and recruit them into the BA/MA program. Faculty are emailed a reminder at the end of each semester to recommend names to the director, and the director contacts these students.

Improvements in long-distance, virtual learning has made keeping students displaced by the hurricanes tethered to the program. Graduate students leaving Lake Charles permanently are asking to stay in the program, and the director has assured them that some classes will allow Big Blue Button or Zoom attendance.

2021-2022:

In an effort to improve students' critical writing abilities, the department has worked to encourage student participation in academic conferences. Two MA students, Brittany Reese Menefee and Rachel Pitman presented critical papers at local Louisiana academic conferences. The Best paper award for the Emerging Scholars Seminar concluding the Research Methods course continues to be a departmental event. This year, it was awarded to Abbie Skinner by popular vote. Encouraging both faculty and all graduate students to the beginning grad students' seminar has brought visibility and support to our graduates' academic writing.

2022-2023:

In reviewing their experiences in the program via the survey included in their portfolio, some students still want improvements in career advising and direction after graduate school. The coordinator has added job searches via HigherEdJobs.com and The Chronicle of Higher Education's job site to the Research Methods class. A form email inviting students to try out a variety of search engines was drafted and trialed this semester. I want to add an instructional video about "telling your story" as way of approaching the CV/resume.

2023-2024:

One trend revealed to me by portfolios made by various graduate students from the MFA program: a reluctance to write academic essays/papers. In her exit survey, Abbie Skinner writes that she hadn't had an English literature class since high school, but it was clear to me that she learned to embrace literary analysis and academic research. Her portfolio, like two others, included a newer paper written later in her MA career. Two other students, however, submitted a paper they wrote in their first year of the program, implying a reluctance to write a paper after leaving the Research Methods course. I'll be notifying my colleagues of this trend, which to me needs remedying. A student leaving the MA program should have written multiple research papers.

2024-2025:

The program has emphasized the importance of English graduate student research to the college and University, and as a result, the Women's and Gender Studies Luncheon series has adopted a practice of inviting graduating students to present original research in their final semester to a campus audience. This year, Robert Miller presented "'The harder it is, the deeper it carves you': The Legacy of Pat Schneider's Writing Method." Continuing to make connections beyond the department and give opportunities for students to present should remain a priority for the program.

4 Program Highlights from the Reporting Year

2020-2021:

Students in the Research Methods class (S21) held the first Emerging Scholars Seminar live on Zoom. Attendance just exceeded 25 persons, a record number of participants. One student, Rachel Pittman, was awarded the Emerging Scholars Outstanding Paper Award. The Program hopes that awards like these will celebrate student achievement and augment their developing CVs.

2021-2022:

Having social events at the beginning and end of the year helped build community about graduate students. Picnic at the Park in September was a modest success, but the party to celebrate our graduation candidates was a much larger success. We also held a clothing swap at the graduation event, which was surprisingly popular. I think a part to celebrate our graduate students is now a must-do every year!

2022-2023:

Dr. LeJeune and Dr. Whelan-Stewart offered a graduate/undergraduate course that was interdisciplinary by nature and included field trips to important but endangered ecosystems in SWLA. Field experts met the class on site to explain the science connecting humans, animals, and plants to these locations and urged students to use creative essays, poems, or fiction to help acquaint the general population with these regions and foster relationships with them. The course was an enormous success, particularly with graduate students. Their work will be on display in the library and in the community via the Riverside Park Nature Trail.

2023-2024:

The Women and Gender Studies Luncheon Series offers graduating MA students to present their academic materials to a University-wide audience of fellow students, staff, and faculty. This year's presenters were Abbie Skinner ("Subversion and Dissolution in Samantha Schweblin's *Fever Dream*") and Taryn White and Hannah Koonce ("Sorority in Taylor Swift's Discography")

2024-2025:

Two MA graduate students presented their academic works at national conferences. Karris McCollum presented "Examining Hyperreality in Will Wright's *The Sims*" at the PCA/ACA conference in April of 2025. This paper was an extension of a shorter paper written in Literary Theory and Criticism. Ben Watson presented at the virtual portion of the Louisville Conference on Literature and Culture in February. His paper, "Resurrecting the Dead Author: Exploring Process-Based Approaches to Creative Pedagogy to Provide Better Mentorship for Writers," was his Research Methods paper.

5 Program Mission

The Master of Arts in English program will prepare graduate students for further graduate study and /or for the practice of their discipline by providing them with skills in advanced scholarly research; in clear, concise, and persuasive writing; in the analysis and evaluation of literature, with emphasis on the canon of great works in the English language; and in effective teaching.

6 Institutional Mission Reference

The MA in English program supports McNeese's mission to serve residents of southwest Louisiana who are seeking continuing professional education and as a program primarily related to education and arts and sciences.

7 Assessment and Benchmark ENGL 651 Bibliography and Library Research

Assessment: ENGL 651 SLO 1, 2, and 3 are assessed by course grades on library assignments including:

- Editing assignment.
- Book/Critical Literature Review.
- Annotated Bibliography of Criticism.
- Seminar paper and Symposium (which will also include an abstract of your own paper and written responses to other papers).

ENGL 651: Student Learner Outcomes

On completion of this course students will be able to do the following:

1. Understand nature and practice of various scholarly pursuits.
2. Locate relevant research material.
3. Analyze, interpret, and evaluate critical literature of the profession.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the profession through the production of scholarly work.
5. Articulate and negotiate the “problems” that face scholars, including the changes in traditional research issues that have resulted from literary theory and cultural studies.
6. Engage in practical professional activities such as applying to doctoral programs, submitting work for presentation/publication, and entering the job market.

Benchmark: 100% of ENGL 651 students should score at least “average proficiency” on 601’s SLOs 1, 2, and 3.

Outcome Links

Research [Program]

Students will engage prevailing trends in literary, critical, and theoretical research and produce their own scholarly contributions.

7.1 Data

SLO 1:

Academic Year	Students that scored:			
	"above average proficiency"		"average proficiency"	
	#	%	#	%
2020-2021	9/9	100%	—	—
2021-2022	5/6	83%	1/6	16%
2022-2023	7/9	78%	2/9	22%
2023-2024	5/5	100%	—	—
2024-2025	7/7	100%	—	—

SLO 2:

Academic Year	Students that scored:			
	"above average proficiency"		"average proficiency"	
	#	%	#	%
2020-2021	9/9	100%	—	—
2021-2022	5/6	83%	1/6	16%
2022-2023	9/9	100%	—	—
2023-2024	5/5	100%	—	—
2024-2025	7/7	100%	—	—

SLO 3:

Academic Year	Students that scored:			
	"above average proficiency"		"average proficiency"	
	#	%	#	%
2020-2021	9/9	100%	—	—
2021-2022	6/6	100%	0/6	0%
2022-2023	8/9	89%	—	—
2023-2024	5/5	100%	—	—
2024-2025	7/7	100%	—	—

7.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2020-2021:

In order to engage students in real-life professional endeavors, English 651 incorporated a few assignments that interacted with crowd-sourced initiatives, like The Library of Congress's By The People Initiative. Students deciphered handwritten texts in pairs and uploaded their documents to the Library of Congress's website as contributions to the Library's larger project. Real world engagement shows students the value of literary scholarship, editing, and archiving, and students truly appreciated these opportunities. I attribute the 100% success rate on SLO 1, 2, and 3, to this real world engagement.

2021-2022:

While most students scored well on SLO 1, 2, and 3, some students had major setbacks on particular assignments. I had my first real challenges with students wholly unfamiliar with finding books on library shelves. Even after acquainting them with call numbers and books, students seemed resistant to use the library's holdings. I continued to find students citing papers that published in predatory journals or books not categorized under literary studies. Other students failed to embed footnotes or endnotes into their final papers, though it was a requirement and features in every secondary source. To improve course content, I added a module on predatory journals and conferences and showed students where to locate subject terms on book covers. I'm also considering adding the MLA handbook to the course texts and requiring students to use it as they footnote.

2022-2023:

Last year's problems using credible library sources were corrected with a variety of in-class assignments requiring students to use the library catalog and databases. I photocopied important sections from the MLA handbook instead of requiring it as a text, and asked students to use the photocopies during particular in-class bibliography and note-making exercises. This helped. This year's challenge seemed to be the book review. Students with backgrounds outside of literary studies had great difficulty finding recently published academic books of literary analysis to review. They also didn't seem to understand the form of the book review, despite handouts explaining the organization and collectively reading sample book reviews. One student was stumped because the two book reviews from two different authors didn't share the exact same organizing structure. In some cases, students were too general when summarizing a book's points. I'll need to revisit the examples of book reviews that I handed out and I'll need to ask students to outline the two different book reviews. We'll compare the outlines with the handout of a book review's elements.

2023-2024:

Students benefited from the additional assignments asking students to practice writing bibliographic citations in MLA, read sample book reviews, and use a graphic organizer to outline the qualities of actual book reviews. I will keep these assignments in the class rotation and will have them available to my peers who ask graduate students to write book reviews for their classes.

2024-2025:

To develop good research habits and automaticity in generating relevant academic searches in the library, a smaller in-class assignment on producing an enumerative bibliography was incorporated into the class period. This enumerative bibliography paved the way for the larger annotative bibliography to be done independently by students and for a weighty grade. Students showed better success in finding relevant sources earlier in the process for composing annotated bibliography, conference paper, and seminar paper. They also had more practice and success formatting bibliographic citations, which they'll need to know as teachers of English 102.

8 Assessment and Benchmark ENGL 651 Scholarly Paper

Assessment: SLO 4 is assessed by the scholarly paper in ENGL 651.

ENGL 651: Student Learner Outcomes

On completion of this course students will be able to do the following:

1. Understand nature and practice of various scholarly pursuits.
2. Locate relevant research material.
3. Analyze, interpret, and evaluate critical literature of the profession.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the profession through the production of scholarly work.
5. Articulate and negotiate the “problems” that face scholars, including the changes in traditional research issues that have resulted from literary theory and cultural studies.
6. Engage in practical professional activities such as applying to doctoral programs, submitting work for presentation/publication, and entering the job market.

Benchmark: 100% of ENGL 651 students should score at least “average proficiency” on SLO 4 as determined by the rubric for the scholarly paper.

Outcome Links

Research [Program]

Students will engage prevailing trends in literary, critical, and theoretical research and produce their own scholarly contributions.

8.1 Data

SLO 4:

Academic Year	Students that scored:			
	"above average proficiency"		"average proficiency"	
	#	%	#	%
2020-2021	9/9	100%	—	—
2021-2022	5/6	83%	1/6	17%
2022-2023	8/9*	88%	—	—
2023-2024	5/5	100%	—	—
2024-2025	7/7	100%	—	—

*One student was given a WN.

8.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2020-2021:

The director restructured English 651 by adding a textbook, *The Handbook to Literary Research*, and required readings. In-class, small group assignments tasked students with putting their knowledge to practice, and larger, individual assignments were given to students to display mastery. Graphic organizers were attached to more abstract assignments to make the research and writing processes more concrete. Faculty who participated in the Emerging Scholars Seminar said the research papers were some of the best they'd seen in the past four years.

2021-2022:

I was pleased that students met the benchmark again this year. To improve upon last year, I showed students examples of the ways literary conferences organized papers under panel topics. Students submitted abstracts for their papers on Moodle, then read them in class so that we could draw connections between the subjects and group the papers under particular themes or methodologies. We titled these panels and published them on our schedule, which was emailed to the faculty, our English graduate students, and those students enrolled in English 410 (Capstone course) and potentially interested in graduate school.

2022-2023:

One area that can be improved upon is mastery of MLA conventions. Since these students might be instructing ENGL 102, mastery of MLA documentation and citing is a necessity. Students inadequately or incorrectly formatted blocked quotations taken from both prose and poetry. I'm going to let our Supervisor of Freshman English know which students have not mastered MLA so that he can keep an eye on these students. Students should know that their professors are in communication with one another to improve the quality of English 102 instruction and graduates' skills.

2023-2024:

This year, all students scored above average proficiency despite several of them never having written a literary analysis paper before. I really emphasized reading and planning strategies, even bringing in brightly colored note cards, pens, tinted transparent post-it notes to help students organize and focus their ideas. This strategy is a keeper and was popular with the students!

Students had trouble placing the footnote mark at the end of their sentences and placed them after key words in the middle of their sentences. I can make a quick assignment to call attention to this academic convention.

2024-2025:

The placement of footnotes again was a problem for two of the seven students. I'm developing a smaller in-class assignment that (1) asks students to insert a concise footnote into a prepared electronic text and (2) to follow the thread of a footnote by locating a relevant book. One area of success was embedding manipulatives in class: I printed and cut to size students' abstracts for their conference papers. Students collectively grouped the abstracts into potential panels and then proposed names for the panels. This activity allowed students to read abstracts for strong thesis statements and to question one another if an argument wasn't clear enough. I used their arrangement and panel titles for the end-of-year graduate Emerging Scholars seminar.

Files: See list of attachments to view. (Requires Adobe Reader or compatible viewer).

Copy of Paper checklist

9 Assessment and Benchmark ENGL 651 Self-directed Learning and Presentation

Assessment: Student presentations should demonstrate at least "average proficiency" on SLO 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.

ENGL 651: Student Learner Outcomes

On completion of this course students will be able to do the following:

1. Understand nature and practice of various scholarly pursuits.
2. Locate relevant research material.
3. Analyze, interpret, and evaluate critical literature of the profession.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the profession through the production of scholarly work.
5. Articulate and negotiate the "problems" that face scholars, including the changes in traditional research issues that have resulted from literary theory and cultural studies.
6. Engage in practical professional activities such as applying to doctoral programs, submitting work for presentation/publication, and entering the job market.

Benchmark: 100% of ENGL 651 students should score at least "average proficiency" on SLO 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 on the self-directed learning and presentation component of the course.

Outcome Links

Presentation [Program]

Graduates demonstrate ability to engage in self-directed learning and then explain and present their processes and products in a classroom setting.

Research [Program]

Students will engage prevailing trends in literary, critical, and theoretical research and produce their own scholarly contributions.

9.1 Data

SLO 1:

Academic Year	Students that scored:			
	"above average proficiency"		"average proficiency"	
	#	%	#	%
2020-2021	9/9	100%	—	—
2021-2022	5/6	83%	1/6	17%
2022-2023	7/9	78%	2/9	22%
2023-2024	5/5	100%	—	—
2024-2025	7/7	100%	—	—

SLO 2:

Academic Year	Students that scored:			
	"above average proficiency"		"average proficiency"	
	#	%	#	%
2020-2021	9/9	100%	—	—
2021-2022	5/6	83%	1/6	17%
2022-2023	9/9	100%	—	—
2023-2024	5/5	100%	—	—
2024-2025	7/7	100%	—	—

SLO 3:

Academic Year	Students that scored:			
	"above average proficiency"		"average proficiency"	
	#	%	#	%
2020-2021	9/9	100%	—	—
2021-2022	6/6	100%	—	—
2022-2023	8/9	89%	—	—
2023-2024	5/5	100%	—	—
2024-2025	7/7	100%	—	—

SLO 4:

Academic Year	Students that scored:			
	"above average proficiency"		"average proficiency"	
	#	%	#	%
2020-2021	9/9	100%	—	—
2021-2022	5/6	83%	1/6	17%
2022-2023	8/9*	89%	—	—
2023-2024	5/5	100%	—	—
2024-2025	7/7	100%	—	—

*One student had a grade of "Incomplete."

SLO 5:

Academic Year	Students that scored:			
	"above average proficiency"		"average proficiency"	
	#	%	#	%
2020-2021	9/9	100%	—	—
2021-2022	5/6	83%	1/6	17%
2022-2023	7/9*	78%	—	—
2023-2024	4/5	100%	1/5	20%
2024-2025	7/7	100%	—	—

*Two students failed to submit CVs.

Files: See list of attachments to view. (Requires Adobe Reader or compatible viewer).

Emerging scholars Conference 2021

9.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2020-2021:

The checklist for writing a research paper included a section on audience engagement. Students were asked to speak slowly, make repeated eye-contact, add inflection to their voices, and emphasize topic sentences and concluding sentences to orient their audiences. Asking students to practice reading their papers in pairs helped them to experience both being a captive audience member and a presenter. Students were also asked to time their papers, record their time, and mark language that they stumbled over.

2021-2022:

Students uniformly presented polished papers to an audience and used the same tools (a checklist) from last year to prepare. It's worth noting that this was the first face-to-face presentation since the pandemic, and every graduate student was visibly nervous. Also since we were face-to-face, most students thoughtfully prepared handouts for me to distribute to the audience to aid in following the paper. I've saved the handouts so that I can show next year's students examples of helpful handouts.

Last year, I realized incoming students needed to be acquainted with the CV and made it a project for our class. This year, to help students build their Curriculum Vitae, I supplied them with two in-class activities that resulted in entries for their CV (a transcription project with Patti Threat in the library's archives and our end-of-semester, public seminar). I also typed out how they should list each entry on their CV.

2022-2023: Two students (one was assigned an incomplete) failed to turn in CVs. I am not too worried, since both of these students are MFA students and will need to submit a CV for Professional Endeavors, a required course. Each student was overwhelmed with the workload for their courses; one spoke English as his second language. Getting them to turn in their final seminar and conference papers is the most important goal of the course.

2023-2024:

I added lectures on predatory journals and conferences to Research Methods, which helped students differentiate pseudo-academic audiences using "academese" from actually thoughtful academic contributions. I also included an article written for students about how to ethically present yourself as credible without feeling like an expert. Students truly appreciated that article, "Writing with Authority: Ethos and the Seminar Essay," from Reimagining the Graduate Seminar Essay in Literary Studies.

2024-2025:

In preparation for the end-of-semester seminar, students read their conference paper to at least one other peer and to use a checklist and timer to analyze that person's presentation of material. The change I made was to pair learners whose themes or approaches were similar so that students might suggest content changes for a peer or derive inspiration for the peer's paper. Students felt more prepared to act as authorities and handle questions from the outside visitors on the night of the seminar.

10 Assessment and Benchmark Comprehensive Exam/Portfolio Review Form

Assessment: Professors use the Comprehensive Exam/Portfolio Review Form to rank research ability, writing ability, speaking ability, knowledge of the discipline, and student CVs.

Benchmark 1: Any candidate should average a rank of top 50% on the research ability sections of the Comprehensive Exam/Portfolio Review Form.

Benchmark 2: Any candidate should average a rank of top 20% on the writing ability sections of the Comprehensive Exam/Portfolio Review Form. This is assessed through a revised essay from a graduate course that the candidate has taken.

Prior to 2018-2019, the benchmark was any candidate should average a rank of top 50% on the writing ability sections of the Comprehensive Exam/Portfolio Review Form. This is assessed through a revised essay from a graduate course that the candidate has taken.

Benchmark 3: Any candidate should average a rank of top 50% on the speaking ability sections of the Comprehensive Exam/Portfolio Review Form.

Benchmark 4: Any candidate should average a rank of top 50% on the knowledge of the discipline section of the Comprehensive Exam/Portfolio Review Form.

Benchmark 5: All students should supply CVs that score 50% or better than other students of same rank.

Prior to 2018-2019, the benchmark was the portfolio requirement asks graduating students to submit a CV in which they catalog activities they have participated in and professional work they have completed (e.g., seminar papers, creative work, review of others' creative work, awards, attendance or participation in conferences, etc.). Professors use this CV to rank students on the Comprehensive Exam/Portfolio Review Form. Faculty members evaluate the CV with the Candidate Review Rubric.

Outcome Links

Content Knowledge [Program]

Graduates demonstrate knowledge of the development of literary traditions.

Presentation [Program]

Graduates demonstrate ability to engage in self-directed learning and then explain and present their processes and products in a classroom setting.

Research [Program]

Students will engage prevailing trends in literary, critical, and theoretical research and produce their own scholarly contributions.

10.1 Data

Research Ability:

Academic Year	# of candidates that completed the portfolio	Top 5% or 10%	Top 20%	Top 50%
2020-2021	4/4	3/4	—	1/4
2021-2022	7/7	5/7	1/7	1/7
2022-2023	5/5	5/5		
2023-2024	6/6	4/6	1/6	1/6
2024-2025	5/5	3/5	1/5	1/5

10.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2020-2021:

We missed our benchmark by one student; however, the student was asked to revise her thesis continuously for her committee members. In the end, the committee worked successfully to outline research failings and encourage changes.

2021-2022:

We nearly met our benchmark, but I'd argue that one portfolio was invalid: a student failed to submit within his portfolio a revised paper that included academic research. Since the portfolio is supposed to help professors evaluate a student's research ability upon graduation, I revisited the language on the instructions for the portfolio to make clear that students should submit a research paper as a sample of their work. I also included that footnotes and endnotes were preferred.

2022-2023:

Four of the five students were able to present original research papers to graduate-student conferences, and working with their faculty mentors for these projects no doubt improved their research abilities. I hope to continue to notify graduate students about conferences and the financial aid available to them for this work.

2023-2024:

One student appears to have been able to avoid taking literature courses that require academic papers after English 651. I'm going to monitor to see if this is a trend.

2024-2025:

Of the five papers submitted as a writing sample on the portfolio, four were written in Research Methods and at the beginning of the students' graduate careers. Only one came from a graduate Shakespeare class taken after Research Methods. I've already alerted the Creative Writing director and a few of my colleagues to a trend in students attempting to avoid taking classes that require research papers in graduate classes. I plan to address all of my colleagues individually, if not collectively, about requiring research components in other literary products.

10.2 Data

Writing Ability:

Academic Year	# of candidates that completed the portfolio	Top 5% or 10%	Top 20%	Top 50%
2020-2021	4/4	2/4	1/4	1/4
2021-2022	7/7	6/7	1/7	
2022-2023	5/5	5/5		
2023-2024	6/6	5/6	1/6	
2024-2025	5/5	3/5	1/5	1/5

10.2.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2020-2021:

One student commented that he had learned more about academic writing from composing his comprehensive exams and discussing their responses with his professors than he had in his graduate career. My sense is that a poorly designed Research Methods course contributed to his unmooring, but I am pleased that the processes of the examination committee can catch and correct student deficits before it's too late.

2021-2022:

Students met the benchmark and excelled in written communication above all other areas of the rubric. One professor argued that two of his examinees needed to support their claims and assertions with better historical research. We need to continue to insist on the connection between better writing and research.

2022-2023:

Again, 4/5 students presented original researched essays at regional or nation graduate student conferences. Working with their mentors to write their ideas clearly so that a listening audience could easily follow their written argument no doubt contributed to their overall success. I hope to continue notifying students of these conference opportunities.

2023-2024:

Faculty scores of students' writing ability were all high. The one student who navigated the program by trying to avoid academic research papers attempted to turn in his first academic paper from English 651 with minor revisions. I insisted on substantial revisions, and with Dr. O'Dell's insistence on his improved paper for his course, my colleague and I were able to put constructive pressure on this student to improve his writing. Teaming up to apply constructive pressure can be one way to make lasting change in a student before they graduate.

2024-2025:

We did not meet the benchmark since one student was ranked in the 50% by two of three professors. These two professors served on the student's thesis committee and made note of her thesis' copious mechanical errors. The paper submitted in the portfolio requires a few key revisions for it to be in the top 20% ranking. Thankfully, the student was forced to fix the thesis's errors, so we hope that she developed some automaticity in revising the same errors again and again.

10.3 Data

Speaking Ability:

Academic Year	# of candidates that completed the portfolio	Top 5% or 10%	Top 20%	Top 50%
2020-2021	4/4	2/4	1/4	1/4
2021-2022	7/7	4/7	3/7	
2022-2023	5/5	4/5	1/5	
2023-2024	6/6	5/6	1/6	
2024-2025	5/5	4/5	1/5	

10.3.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2020-2021:

Since speaking ability is sometimes linked to a deficit in the organization of one's ideas I have added graphic organizers to English 651. I hope to build these organizers into my other graduate classes and share them with my colleagues.

2021-2022:

Students met the benchmark for speaking ability. I hope that resuming face-to-face interactions will allow our students to develop confidence in speaking with professors during those exams that include oral interviews.

2022-2023:

All of the students who came from our undergraduate program were adept in responding to spontaneous and discipline-specific questions by the conclusion of their graduate career. Students who come from other undergraduate programs might need to be monitored and aided more particularly in Research Methods and Literary Theory, two courses encouraged upon one's entrance into the program.

2023-2024:

This may be one of the strengths of our program, which provides multiple opportunities for students to deliver presentations to undergraduates and graduate students. Having Dr. Costello also deliver oral comprehensive exams further strengthens these abilities.

2024-2025:

Students performed best in this area, perhaps because of their teaching and tutoring responsibilities. All of the MA students had taught for at least two years and had likely tutored for an additional year. Their roles as embedded tutors in other veteran teaching assistants' courses also likely makes professional conversations begin earlier.

10.4 Data

Knowledge of the Discipline:

Academic Year	# of candidates that completed the portfolio	Top 5% or 10%	Top 20%	Top 50%
2020-2021	4/4	3/4	1/4	
2021-2022	7/7	3/7	3/7	1/7
2022-2023	5/5	4/5	1/5	
2023-2024	6/6	5/6	1/6	
2024-2025	5/5	2/5	3/5	

10.4.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2020-2021:

Students seem to uniformly display knowledge of the discipline by performing original critical analyses, presenting them according to MLA guidelines, and displaying a wide knowledge of literary authors across time and the English-speaking world. I attribute this to the degree plan's requirement of breadth of study and to individual faculty members' skill at demonstrating and fostering textual analysis.

2021-2022:

Students met the benchmark again. However, we have added a new professor who doesn't seem to be analyzing students' knowledge of the MA discipline as much as the MFA discipline, and this confusion is affecting the scores for knowledge of discipline. I plan to meet with this professor to discuss the nature of MA candidate's portfolios and the accompanying rubric.

2022-2023:

All students met the benchmark. I keep knowledge of the discipline in check by offering an evolving MA reading list and using the standardized comprehensive exam as a motivating factor in breadth and depth of knowledge. The standardized comprehensive exam also tests professional knowledge by testing skills-based concepts covered in Research Methods.

2023-2024:

Yes, students met the benchmark, but one initially did not. He was required to turn in additional work to two professors showing that he had filled his knowledge gaps. Professors and the department chair have long been aware of this student's refusal to attend MA/MFA team-building functions and to submit work on time. We all shared intentions to push this student, and the group approach worked.

2024-2025:

Professors' marks for one student varied widely for whether she was knowledgeable of her discipline. A definition of what this idea means might be in order and posted on the review form.

10.5 Data

Student CVs:

Academic Year	# of candidates that completed the portfolio	Top 5% or 10%	Top 20%	Top 50%
2020-2021	4/4	3/4	—	1/4
2021-2022	7/7	5/7		2/7
2022-2023	5/5	4/5	1/5	
2023-2024	6/6	5/6	1/6	
2024-2025	5/5	3/5	2/5	

10.5.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2020-2021:

The program director had become aware that graduate students had not been exposed to the CV, nor asked to write one. The director worked with two students closely this semester to prepare their CVs, but has since included an assignment to write a CV in Research Methods class.

2021-2022:

2/7 students scored 50% are better on their CVs. The formatting was pretty poor on one and the second was a resume. I will continue to address the issue of formatting a proper CV in Research Methods. (Neither of these students had the most recent version of the class in which the CV is an assignment and focus for one module.

2022-2023:

Students achieved the benchmark. Building and formatting a CV has become a standard practice in Research Methods. I even created a couple of activities that students can claim on their CV. Handing them examples for how to cite these activities on their CV seems to be helping. Another tool I can use to encourage attention to this skill is to use real-life examples of graduate students attending conferences as they come up in the semester. I usually congratulate these students in group emails or in the ENFL newsletter. Showing students in Research Methods how their peers might cite their conference presentations on the CV might be a more relevant, provocative example for them to emulate.

2023-2024:

Students who are full-time teachers do not value the CV and submit scanty versions of their Resume. I'd like to find and show them CVs and resumes used by more polished educators.

2024-2025:

While all of the CVs looked professionally polished, one student listed only accomplishments achieved through McNeese events or connections. My goal is to have students engage in outside conferences or publications, and I failed to inspire this student to seek out opportunities.

11 Assessment and Benchmark Departmental Preliminary Objective Exam

Assessment: Departmental Preliminary Objective Exam. Specific questions on the exam assess students' knowledge of the canon.

Benchmark: Students are required to complete the Departmental Preliminary Objective Exam.

Outcome Links

Content Knowledge [Program]

Graduates demonstrate knowledge of the development of literary traditions.

11.1 Data

Academic Year	# of students that completed the Departmental Preliminary Objective Exam	Average Score
2020-2021	4/4	100%
2021-2022	6/6	—*
2022-2023	5/5	—
2023-2024	2/2	60%
2024-2025	6/6	50%

*Could not find scantrons

11.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2020-2021:

Students averaged a 60% on the preliminary exam. Because I had neglected to advise students already in the MFA program to enroll in English 500, one had to be added late. I am never really sure of who is in the program or not at any given point, since I am not listed as every graduate student's advisor and students are reported in only one of the MA or MFA graduate programs though they might be in both. Thus data from the university helps to skew the actual number in the program. I need a more definite way to catalog students.

2021-2022:

Yes, we were able to test everyone entering the program, which is the benchmark. One problem that I did not foresee is trying to test incoming 4+1 undergrad/grad students. When should they test--when they're first entering the 4+1 degree plan or when they're in the first year of graduate school?

2022-2023:

2023-2024:

The preliminary exam is difficult to administer because some students are only available in the evenings, so I've made it accessible in English 500. Since English 500 is a self-guided experience, some students fail to complete the preliminary exam until the end of the semester. Or, if they're undergraduates taking MA classes with senior privilege and are grandfathered into the MA program, then they miss registering for English 500 completely. Students in the MFA program will decide at various points in their career to pursue the MA, sometimes taking English 500 and sometimes not doing so.

I've settled on at least one goal: I'll need to learn to program the English 500 Moodle course to release reminders to complete various assignments at set times, and I'll need to revise the online preliminary exam this summer.

2024-2025:

I was able to personally examine all of the incoming MA students in the Write to Excellence Center in November 2024. Getting face-to-face contact with students as they take the exam allows us to talk about the reading list and books on review and to personalize the new-student experience. I'll continue to use this method as my primary medium for examining entering students.

12 Assessment and Benchmark Departmental Comprehensive Objective Exam

Assessment: Departmental Comprehensive Objective Exam. Specific questions on the exam assess students' knowledge of the canon.

Benchmark: 100% of students will earn a minimum score of 70% on the exam.

Prior to 2022-2023, the benchmark was 100% of students will earn a minimum score of 69% on the exam.

Prior to 2021-2022, the benchmark was 100% of students will earn a minimum score of 60% on the exam.

Prior to 2018-2019, the benchmark was students are required to complete the Departmental Comprehensive Objective Exam.

Outcome Links

Content Knowledge [Program]

Graduates demonstrate knowledge of the development of literary traditions.

12.1 Data

Academic Year	Students scoring 60% or higher	
	#	%
2018-2019	7/9	77.7%
2019-2020	—	—
2020-2021	4/4	78%

Academic Year	Students scoring 69% or higher	
	#	%
2021-2022	8/8	100%

Academic Year	Students scoring 70% or higher	
	#	%
2022-2023	5/5	76%
2023-2024	5/6	83%
2024-2025	4/4	100%

12.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2020-2021:

I'd like to move the benchmark to 69% for this assessment tool. The exam has added more skills-based questions, which students seem to appreciate, to the identification questions measuring recognition of famous works and authors.

2021-2022:

I'd like to move the benchmark to 70% for this assessment tool. I added more medieval questions (obtained from our medievalist) to the exam to improve its breadth of reach.

2022-2023:

2023-2024:

One student scored a 69% on the comprehensive exam and missed questions relating to his major in poetry. I revisited the concepts of prose, poetry, regular meter, metrical variation, or versification, and required him to analyze a Shakespearean sonnet's meter in relation to its content. I made him revise this analysis until I was certain he showed knowledge of these concepts. In this way, I was able to satisfy his meeting the requirements of the comprehensive examination.

2024-2025:

Thankfully, all students prepared for the exam by consulting the reading list and the books on reserve. I'm sending the reading list to Dr. Emily O'Dell so that she can up date it with works and authors she thinks students should be familiar with.

13 Assessment and Benchmark Graduate Exit Survey

Assessment: Survey given to candidates in their last semester. Allows for students to give feedback about the program.

Benchmark: 75% of MA graduates should rank their level of improvement as at least “(2) significant improvement.”

[Outcome Links](#)

Content Knowledge [Program]

Graduates demonstrate knowledge of the development of literary traditions.

13.1 Data

SLO 1:

Academic Year	Candidates ranking at least "significant improvement"			
	Knowledge of literature		Critical Writing	
	#	%	#	%
2020-2021	4/4	100%	3/4	75%
2021-2022	7/7	100%	7/7	100%
2022-2023	—	—	—	—
2023-2024	7/7	100%	6/7	86%
2024-2025	—	—	—	—

13.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2020-2021:

I feel that the textbook, the assignments, and the graphic organizers in Research Methods will help students like these develop the skills they need sooner and feel more secure in their knowledge.

2021-2022:

All students surveyed felt significant or tremendous improvement in their knowledge of literature and literary studies and in their ability to write critically. Our past success in hiring a trans-Atlantic specialist may be a result of these students' satisfaction, since she was able to offer a diversity of texts and foreground student research. As we move forward with new hires, we aim to select faculty who can broaden our students' knowledge of literature and refine their writing abilities, per our objective.

2022-2023:

2023-2024:

Students once came in with little knowledge of African, South American, Caribbean, and Asian literature, but more of them are **also** coming in with little knowledge of European and English literature. These latest cohorts simply want as much exposure to literature as they can get, and though they appreciate their newfound knowledge of literary theory, they also want to make "broader connections" between literary pieces. Continuing to encourage students to attend regional conferences, whether they are presenting or not, is one way to put them in contact with a wider kind of analysis and reading list.

2024-2025:

English 630 was not offered this year. Instead, English 530 was, and there was no academic paper required for the class.

14 Assessment and Benchmark ENGL 630 American Literature Seminar

Assessment: ENGL 630 American Literature Seminar.

Benchmark: 100% of students in ENGL 630: American Literature Seminar should score at least "average proficiency" on their scholarly paper.

Files: See list of attachments to view. (Requires Adobe Reader or compatible viewer).

The Conference Paper

14.1 Data

Academic Year	Students that scored:			
	"above average proficiency"		"average proficiency"	
	#	%	#	%
2020-2021	5/6	83%	1/6	16%
2021-2022	7/9	78%	2/9	22%
2022-2023	0/0	—	0/0	—
2023-2024	5/7	71%	2/7	29%
2024-2025	0/0	—	0/0	—

14.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2020-2021:

The instructor will continue to provide students with instructions on how to include voice accompaniment to electronic slideshows and rubrics with expectations for a successful presentation. In the future, students might be asked to use screen-cast-o-matic, which better simulates in-person delivery.

2021-2022:

The data suggests that the weakest papers are from students entering a seminar class before taking research methods. A glimpse at the two weakest papers reveals grammatically problematic sentences that try to incorporate literary jargon and a lack of familiarity with essay organization and paragraph development. One helpful exercise that could be worked into this class is to have students read a simple academic paper on a primary source and then show students the components of a scholarly article by dissecting its parts. These components are the same for a scholarly paper, and knowing them might help newer students.

2022-2023:

There was no American literature survey course taught this year.

2023-2024:

The professor who taught the course reported that two of the scholarly papers were turned in after the due date, but all were of average or above proficiency. I've sent the SLOs measured by the scholarly paper to the professor so that we're in communication about how it accomplishes the Program's goals.

2024-2025:

The American literature seminar was not offered this year, so there were no academic papers to sample for this benchmark.

15 Assessment and Benchmark ENGL 630 Self-directed Learning and Presentation

Assessment: ENGL 630 Self-directed Learning and Presentation.

Benchmark: 100% of ENGL 630 students should score at least "average proficiency" on SLO 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 on the self-directed learning and presentation component of the course.

Files: See list of attachments to view. (Requires Adobe Reader or compatible viewer).

Presentation Rubric

15.1 Data

SLO 1:

Academic Year	Students that scored:			
	"above average proficiency"		"average proficiency"	
	#	%	#	%
2020-2021	5/6	83%	—	—
2021-2022	—	—	—	—
2022-2023	0/0	—	0/0	—
2023-2024	7/7	100	—	—
2024-2025*	4/6	67%	2/6	33%

*Note: data from ENGL 530

SLO 2:

Academic Year	Students that scored:			
	"above average proficiency"		"average proficiency"	
	#	%	#	%
2020-2021	5/6	83%	—	—
2021-2022	5/6	83%	1/6	17%
2022-2023	00	—	—	—
2023-2024	7/7	100%	—	—
2024-2025*	4/6	67%	2/6	33%

*Note: data from ENGL 530

SLO 3:

Academic Year	Students that scored:			
	"above average proficiency"		"average proficiency"	
	#	%	#	%
2020-2021	5/6	83%	—	—
2021-2022	6/6	100%	0/0	0%
2022-2023	0/0	—	—	—
2023-2024	7/7	100%	—	—
2024-2025*	4/6	67%	2/6	33%

*Note: data from ENGL 530

SLO 4:

Academic Year	Students that scored:			
	"above average proficiency"		"average proficiency"	
	#	%	#	%
2020-2021	5/6	83%	—	—
2021-2022	5/6	83%	1/6	17%
2022-2023	0/0	—	—	—
2023-2024	7/7	100%	—	—
2024-2025*	4/6	67%	2/6	33%

*Note: data from ENGL 530

SLO 5:

Academic Year	Students that scored:			
	"above average proficiency"		"average proficiency"	
	#	%	#	%
2020-2021	5/6	83%	—	—
2021-2022	5/6	83%	1/6	17%
2022-2023	0/0	—	—	—
2023-2024	7/7	100%	—	—
2024-2025*	6/7	85%	1/7	15%

*Note: data from ENGL 530

15.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2020-2021:

One student from the class took an incomplete because of housing instability. She was unable to provide a research paper and make up her lost work. Knowing that even graduate students seem unable to manage their own time without outside discipline is helpful to faculty moving forward.

2021-2022:

Students continue to meet the benchmark for independently preparing their papers and presenting them logically to an audience. The success of the students is hard-earned. Many struggled for weeks to formulate a thesis that responded to a problem or a gap in scholarship, and they continued to struggle at either expanding their eight-paged argument into a twelve-paged seminar paper or cutting a larger paper down into a smaller paper. This year, I added a couple of nights to serve as workshop/writing days and consults with the professor, and I think that these were tremendously helpful to students. I plan to continue this practice next year.

2023-2024:

The professor reported that the presentations were various in their formats, including infographics, video essays, and Prezi "slideshows." These various ways of organizing, relaying, and considering academic materials are excellent practices for students of the twenty-first century and its dynamic use of technologically enhanced multimedia. I'd like to keep Dr. Costello on the rotation for the American Literature seminar.

2024-2025:

An area needing improvement in student presentations in American literature concerns discussing genres. Two students neglected to use academic sources when presenting on the forms of the villanelle and flash fiction. Instead of searching the library for academic discussions of these genres, they instead referenced popular internet archives (i. e., poetrysoup.com) and Engl 671/672 workshop discussions.