3-Year Academic Assessment Plan Cover Sheet

Assessment plans are due February 16, 2015
Email to: assessment@unlv.edu

Program Information:

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<tr>
<th>Program Assessed</th>
<th>Creative Writing, MFA &amp; Ph.D.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Department</td>
<td>English</td>
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<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>Liberal Arts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department Chair</td>
<td>Dr. Richard Harp</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment Coordinator</td>
<td>Claudia Keelan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date Submitted</td>
<td>9/22/15</td>
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Contact Person for This Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Claudia Keelan</th>
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<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>702-895-3333</td>
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<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td><a href="mailto:claudia.keelan@unlv.edu">claudia.keelan@unlv.edu</a></td>
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Please address the following items:

- What are the student learning outcomes? Please provide a numbered list.
- **Plans must include a curriculum map showing which courses will address which learning outcomes.** Examples can be found here: [http://provost.unlv.edu/Assessment/map.html](http://provost.unlv.edu/Assessment/map.html)
- Which learning outcomes will be assessed in each cycle year (i.e., assessment timeline)?
- How will the learning outcomes be assessed? (Programs must use at least one direct assessment of student learning.)
- Undergraduate programs should assess at least one University Undergraduate Learning Outcome (UULO) each year, which may or may not overlap with a program learning outcome.
- Graduate programs should assess at least one outcome related to one of the following graduate level requirements each year:
  - student engagement in research, scholarship, creative expression and/or appropriate high-level professional practice.
  - activities requiring originality, critical analysis and expertise.
  - the development of extensive knowledge in the field under study.
- What is your plan for sharing the assessment results and acting on them (i.e., closing the loop)?

Please limit the narrative portion of your report to no more than four pages. You may attach appendices with data, tables, charts, or other materials as needed. Please explain the relevant conclusions from any appendices in your narrative. Please contact the Office of Academic Assessment if you have questions or need assistance.
Description and Rationale

The Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing (Poetry and Fiction) at UNLV is a three year program which requires the completion of 54 credits in Creative Writing workshops, Forms courses, Literature classes, as well as independent work in Thesis Hours, Translation, Critical Essay and a Travel abroad requirement. Students are encouraged to complete all of their in-class coursework in the first two years, with the third year reserved for independent work on theses, translation and travel abroad. All of the students in the MFA program in Creative Writing at UNLV, while working primarily within their own genre, are required to take courses in alternate genres, as well. Unlike many traditional Creative Writing programs, the MFA at UNLV is not only a studio program; rather, students are required to creatively and critically engaged with English, American and World Literatures to better create the context in which their own writing takes place.

Learning Outcomes

- Through 54 credits of Creative Writing Workshop, Forms courses, Literature classes, and independent work in theses hours, translation, translation, critical essay and a travel abroad requirement, students will establish the creative and critical context through which their subsequent writing will develop.
- By reading and writing in other genres, students will develop a creative and critical appreciation of the canonical contexts from which new writing emerges.
- Through close reading and translation, students will develop a practical appreciation for the international milieus of new writing.
- Upon completion of the program, students will have produced a complete manuscript of original work with the intention of publication.

Assessment of Learning Outcomes

Our assessment measures are designed to measure the creative and critical expression of our students through a three-year program.

- Students take 30 hours of in class coursework and are assessed individually by their instructors through portfolio, exams, and critical essays, as well as oral and digital presentations.
- Subsequently, students take 24 credits independently, working closely with an advisor and are assessed individually in translation projects, thesis manuscripts, critical essays, independent study and international experience.

- Additionally, through a survey of student publication and awards in 2014 conducted by the MFA coordinator, we’ve seen that our students are successfully publishing fiction, poetry and nonfiction in prominent magazines including The New York Times, The Guardian, The Daily Beast, LA Review of Books, The American Poetry Review and elsewhere.
• Several 2013 graduates are teaching English at the college level in Korea and Taiwan.

• As well, a survey in 2014 of student presentations revealed that more of our students than ever are actively contributing to the arts and letters at the AWP, MLA, FAR WEST POPULAR CULTURE, and etc. conferences. The learning and publication outcomes of 2014 suggest that we continue to attract and graduate Creative Writing students who are successful in their chosen fields.

Doctor of Philosophy with Creative Dissertation

Description and Rationale

The Black Mountain Institute Ph.D. Fellowship program is a three or four 48 credit program designed to build on the foundations of general literary knowledge by requiring students to develop expertise in three areas selected from historical periods, genres, major figures, and special topics in creative writing. In addition, fellows are also required to demonstrate expertise in one foreign language, or competence in two foreign languages. A qualifying examination, demonstrating a student’s competency in his or her three selected areas, is taken during the candidate’s third year, after he or she has completed all course work and the language requirement. In the last year, working closely with a dissertation advisor, the PhD candidate will work on a creative work, such as a book-length manuscript of poems, short stories, or a novel, which will constitute the creative dissertation.

The qualifying examination consists of a twelve-hour, three-part written examination, plus a 90-minute oral examination. The student must pass the qualifying examination on the first or second attempt or be disqualified from continuing the program. The examination is administered by a four-person committee, chosen by the student, comprised of three faculty members from the English department and one Graduate College representative from an outside department.

In part one of the examination, the student will demonstrate detailed knowledge of English Literature in one of the following periods: Old and Middle English, Renaissance, Restoration and Eighteenth Century, Nineteenth Century British, American Literature to 1900, or Twentieth and Twenty-first Century literature.

In part two, the student will demonstrate a substantial knowledge of literature (in English or in translation) in one of the following forms: drama, lyric and reflective poetry, epic and narrative poetry, prose fiction, or nonfiction prose.

In part three, the student will demonstrate extensive knowledge of an additional time period chosen from the list in part one; a major author; a special topic approved by the student’s committee; or an examination of the student’s own writing in relationship to other writers.
After passing the Qualifying Examination, and normally in the third or fourth year of the program, the student will begin a doctoral dissertation under the direction of an Advisor and a Thesis Committee approved by the Graduate Director of the Department.

**Learning Outcomes**

- The 48 credit PhD program with a Creative Dissertation builds upon the foundation laid by the student’s MFA degree allowing them to become experts in their chosen field.
- Students concentrate on a self-chosen historical period, genre and major author in the first part of their PhD experience. Their professors, through examination, critical essays, in addition to oral and or digital presentations, measure their progress individually.
- Students demonstrate expertise in one language or competence in two. They have the option of taking courses in the Foreign Language department or taking an exam administered by the English department.
- After all course work is completed and the foreign language requirement has been fulfilled, students take a 12 hour, three day qualifying examination where they demonstrate detailed knowledge of a) historical period b) genre and c) an additional time period chosen from list one; a major author; a special topic approved by the student’s committee; or an examination of the student’s own writing in relationship to other writers.
- Once the qualifying examination is completed successfully, students complete work on the creative dissertation (a book of poems, short stories or novel).

**Assessment of Learning Outcomes of the PhD with Creative Dissertation**

Our assessment of the learning outcomes from the PhD with Creative Dissertation are designed to measure our students success in using their degrees to gain entry into university teaching or other suitable profession. As well, we survey the publications of our graduates of the PhD with Creative Dissertation to see where they stand nationally.

- Our 2014 survey of students’ success in entering the profession showed the following:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Ph.D. Fellows in Poetry and Fiction</th>
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<tr>
<td>Erica Anzalone, PhD 2012, Lecturer Emerson College, Boston</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christopher Arigo, PhD 2006, Associate Professor, Idaho State University</td>
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<tr>
<td>David Armstrong, PhD 2014, Assistant Professor University of the Incarnate Word.</td>
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<td>Maile Chapman, PhD 2004, Assistant Professor, UNLV</td>
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<td>Colby Gillette, PhD, 2014, Lecturer, UNLV</td>
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<td>Joshua Kryah, PhD 2005, Assistant Professor, University of Missouri</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andrew Nicholson, PhD 2011, Faculty in Residence, UNLV</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alissa Nutting, PhD 2005, Assistant Professor, John Carroll University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Derek Pollard, PhD 2015, Lecturer, UNLV</td>
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• Matthew Shears, PhD 2004, Lecturer, California College of the Arts
• Vu Tran, PhD 2006, Assistant Professor, University of Chicago.
• Jackson Wills, PhD 2013, Free Lance Writer, North Carolina
• Heather Winterer, PhD 2007, Associate Professor, New Mexico State University

• All of these students have published one or more books with a reputable press, such as the University of Colorado Press, Harper and Row, Penguin and elsewhere.