Annual Academic Assessment Report Cover Sheet

Program Information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Assessed</th>
<th>Master of Arts (MA) in English</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Department</td>
<td>Department of English</td>
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<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>Liberal Arts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department Chair</td>
<td>Prof. Gary Totten</td>
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<td>Assessment Coordinator</td>
<td>Prof. Christopher Decker</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date Submitted</td>
<td>September 5, 2017</td>
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Contact Person for This Report

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Please attach a narrative (not to exceed 4 pages, excluding appendices) addressing the following:

- What are the student learning outcomes? Please provide a numbered list.
- Which learning outcomes were assessed?
- How were they 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 was learned from the assessment results?
- How did the program respond to what was learned?

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.
Annual Academic Assessment Report on the MA in English – 2016
Calendar Year

1. Department Mission Statement

   The mission of the UNLV Department of English is to establish historical, cultural, and critical contexts in which students actively consider the intrinsic and extrinsic value of literary works in the English language. By doing so, the department seeks to prepare students to articulate these values in their own thinking, writing, and professional lives—especially in the teaching profession.

2. Student Program Learning Objectives

   1. To understand the historical context of literary works: achieved through Survey courses (Medieval, Renaissance, Eighteenth Century, Nineteenth Century, etc.)
   2. To understand the cultural context of literary works: achieved through Special Topics courses and by foreign language preparation
   3. To understand the critical context of literary works: achieved through all courses and seminars with a critical component and through courses in the history of literary criticism and theory
   4. To consider the intrinsic and extrinsic values of literary works: achieved through preparation for and completion of the MA examination (written or oral)
   5. To articulate said values: achieved through the writing and defense of the Master’s Thesis (optional)

3. Program assessments: methods, outcomes, measurements

   1. Sources of information: Data obtained from the Graduate College in the Spring 2017 semester was especially helpful; this data was compiled by the Graduate College as part of the Graduate Student Annual Review for 2016. A review of coursework essays submitted for graduate seminars also provided additional data.
   2. Research Papers: Original research into historical, cultural, and critical contexts of texts, authors, genres, and movements is represented in these papers, achieving SPLO 1-3 above. Successful results included: a grade of “B” or above.
3. Master’s Examination: A three-hour written or oral examination based on a set reading list prescribed and announced by the English Department fulfilled SPLO 1-4, with a grade of “Pass”.

4. Translation Exam: A reading competency exam (i.e., written exam with dictionary allowed) of one foreign language fulfilled SPLO 2, with a grade of “Pass”.

5. MA Thesis (optional): The completion of a pamphlet-length work of original scholarship fulfilled SPLO 5, upon the approval of the thesis by the Thesis Committee and a successful *viva voce* Thesis Defense.

6. Survey of Student Publications, Presentations, and Awards: Student achievements in this category fulfilled SPLO 1-5, upon the announcement of publication, delivery of presentation, or receipt of award. Of the 9 English MA respondents in the GC Graduate Student Annual Review, 2 students reported having presented conference papers in 2016, and 1 student reported having submitted an article for publication. This result is more than acceptable for students in an MA program in English, of whom conference presentations and scholarly publications are not always expected. A review of coursework essays submitted for graduate seminars shows that program learning objectives 1-3 are being met by students in the program; the data from the GC review, though limited, reinforces this finding.

4. Conclusions from assessment results

1. Students currently enrolled in the MA program in English have progressed successfully according to the established timeline. First-year students have performed well in work for seminars, surveys, and required courses. Second-year students have continued to show successful results in coursework. Second-year students have also completed their foreign language requirement, have assembled their exam committee (also the thesis committee if writing the optional thesis), have passed or are prepared to pass their MA examination. Second-year students electing to complete the thesis completed their thesis and prepared to defend it by the established deadline. Individual students have been nominated for Graduate College awards.

2. These outcomes are at the expected level.

3. These results are in keeping with last year’s results.
4. General conclusion: The program as presently structured and administered is achieving its goals in a successful manner and at an appropriate pace.

5. Use of Results

1. Program coordinators will use assessment results to review the program timeline with a view to the possible introduction of a new BA/MA Sub-Plan, currently under discussion, that would allow the MA program to admit qualified students in their final year of the undergraduate degree to an accelerated MA timeline.

2. A brief exit exam, such as is implemented in other university departments, may be a useful and more reliable way to obtain additional information about student success in meeting program learning objectives. Such an exam could be added to the existing batteries of comprehensive and qualifying examinations already administered.