



Major: English

Degree Designation: B.A.

Program Mission Statement:

The increasingly complex challenges of the 21st century call for university graduates who can think creatively and critically and who can communicate effectively. Students in the English Program develop skills that enhance their ability to thrive in dynamic, vibrant cultural landscapes; that initiate a lifelong process of inquiry, exploration, and discovery; and that can be applied in changing professional and personal settings. The program teaches research, analysis, and argumentation skills that allow students to evaluate and interpret texts from a variety of perspectives. Literary and cultural studies promotes an awareness that extends beyond aesthetic appreciation: students enrich their understanding of themselves and their world by delving into underlying causes, formulating and communicating complex ideas, and exploring the converging forces that produce cultural beliefs and artifacts.

Academic Learning Compact

An Academic Learning Compact (ALC) describes expected core student learning outcomes in three areas: content/discipline knowledge and skills, communication skills, and critical thinking skills. This ALC describes (a) expected core learning outcomes for graduates of the FGCU B.A. English program and (b) examples of strategies that may be used to assess individual student attainment of expected outcomes.

Core Learning Outcomes

Content/Discipline Knowledge and Skills

Graduates will be able to:

1. Evaluate the contributions of both main-stream and marginal authors in their appropriate contexts.
2. Conduct research on topics in literary and cultural studies.
3. Report the results of research using an accepted methodology and manuscript format.
4. Critique a variety of texts in their appropriate contexts.

Communication Skills

Graduates will be able to:

1. Employ the conventions of standard written English.
2. Select a topic, and develop it for a specific audience and purpose, with respect for diverse perspectives.
3. Select, organize, and relate ideas and information with coherence, clarity, and unity.

Critical Thinking Skills

Graduates will be able to:

1. Select and organize information.
2. Identify assumptions and underlying relationships.
3. Synthesize information, and draw reasoned inferences.
4. Formulate an appropriate problem solving strategy.
5. Evaluate the feasibility of the strategy.

Assessment Strategies

Assessment of Content/Discipline Knowledge and Skills

Content/discipline knowledge and skills are assessed at the college and departmental levels through essays, exams, and other projects completed in the following courses: ENG 3014 and capstone course.

Assessment of Communication Skills

Communication skills are assessed as part of the General Education Program through papers, exams, and projects completed in ENC 1101 Composition I, ENC 1102 Composition II, and HUM 2510 Understanding the Visual and Performing Arts. Communication skills are also assessed in the capstone course.

Assessment of Critical Thinking Skills

Critical thinking skills are assessed as part of the General Education Program through papers, exams, and projects completed ENC 1101 Composition I, ENC 1102 Composition II, and HUM 2510 Understanding the Visual and Performing Arts. Critical thinking skills are also assessed in the capstone courses.

Program Assessment Plan and Timeline

The English Program will assess its effectiveness through multi-rater analysis of student essays and through the evaluation of a questionnaire asking for students' feedback on their own performance and on the strengths and weaknesses of the program. ENG 3014, Introduction to Literary and Cultural Studies, and ENG 4930, Senior Seminar, will be used for program assessment, allowing us to compare student performance at the beginning of the program with that at the end. Three raters will evaluate essays from the two classes using a detailed rubric geared primarily (but not exclusively) toward the program goals listed under Content/Discipline Knowledge and Skills. They also will analyze student responses to the questionnaire. Students' essays and questionnaire responses will be compared within each class, and we will achieve an 80% correlation between the analysis of the essays and the analysis of the students' perceptions of their performance, with correlation being any score within 3 points of each other. We also will compare data from the Senior Seminar with that from the introductory course and will see improvement from an elementary to at least an intermediate level of performance. We will track inter-rater reliability among scorers.

Data gathered each semester in the entry and exit courses will be evaluated to determine the level of improvement attained and used to set performance expectations for subsequent years. Data will be gathered every fall semester, analyzed at the start of each spring semester, and discussed by the faculty to watch for trends and to allow individual instructors to consider short-term modifications to individual syllabi and specific classroom practices. Annual data will be accumulated and evaluated for long-term trends, and major changes (e.g., curriculum modifications and hiring projections) will be considered on a regular basis.