Year 1 (2014-15)

Outcome

1. Identify the PLO your program assessed this academic year.

PLO 1: Students who complete the English Major will be able to execute literary arguments based on close reading of texts with attention paid to genre and thematic focus.

Process

2. Identify the artifact(s) (i.e. student work) that you used to assess the PLO. [Papers, presentations, portfolios, test items, specific assignments, capstone work]

We collected the final paper written by every entering English major completing ENLT 140 ("English Inquiry"), the "gateway course" to the major. The total number of papers was 12.

3. Identify the tools (e.g. rubrics, surveys, performance on standardized test questions) used to assess the artifact(s) (i.e. student work).

The department chair developed the following rubrics for evaluating the papers:
1) Read literary texts with attention paid to genre and thematic focus: a. appropriate genre listed; b. thematic focus identified; c. genre **or** thematic focus informs the argument.
2) Generate original and well-organized arguments supported by coherent analysis and specific textual evidence: a. well-defined thesis paragraph; b. well-defined thesis statement; c. overall paragraph structure supports thesis; d. argument based on textual evidence; e. evidence of close reading.

The criteria for analysis: Mastery = 4
Milestone = 2-3
Benchmark = 1

Findings

4. Explain the results of the assessment activities.

 1) a: 0 papers received 4; 6 papers received 2-3; 5 papers received 1; 1 paper received 0
 b: 2 papers received 4; 6 papers received 2-3; 2 papers received 1.
 c: 1 paper received 4; 10 papers received 2-3; 1 paper received 1.
 2) a: 2 papers received 4; 7 papers received 2-3; 3 papers received 1.
 b: 2 papers received 4; 7 papers received 2-3; 3 papers received 1.
 c: 2 paper received 4; 7 papers received 2-3; 3 papers received 1.
 d: 3 papers received 4; 6 papers received 2-3; 3 papers received 1.

e: 4 papers received 4; 1 papers received 2-3; 3 papers received 1; 4 papers received 0.

For 1.a: "1" meant that the student listed a genre at some point in the essay; "2-3" meant that generic identity played a part in analysis; "4" indicated that generic identity informed the thematic and textual insights about the work.

The most surprising evidence was the difference between those papers written about plays, and those written about poems. The papers written about poems were much more likely to show evidence of close reading (half of the papers written about plays showed NO evidence of close reading, while the papers written about poems earned a 4 or 3 in this area.) There seems to be a surprising difference between the way student writers address plays (thematically) and poetry (formally, with attention to genre). As we go forward, it would be worth our while to see if this is anomalous data, or if it holds for other courses.

(None of the papers treated fiction.)

After these papers were rated with the results listed above, we held a meeting of faculty teaching ENLT 140 to review the results. Faculty present suggested that in future we repeat this process, but 1) use multiple scorers rather than just one; 2) keep the rubric, but define the levels even more explicitly, probably in light of AAC&U Rubrics; 3) include a feedback loop to all professors teaching the course.

5. Where applicable, outline the steps you will take to make improvements to the program based on the results of assessment activities identified in #3.

After these papers were rated with the results listed above, we held a meeting of faculty teaching ENLT 140 to review the results. Faculty present suggested that in future we repeat this process, but 1) use multiple scorers rather than just one; 2) keep the rubric, but define the levels even more explicitly, probably in light of AAC&U Rubrics; 3) **communicate these results to professors teaching the course, particularly with regard to generic attention paid to genre.**

6. Are there any new resources needed to make program improvements? If so, please include the resources and provide justification for each in the Budget section of the Annual Report.

NO.

Year 2 (2015-16)

Outcome

1. Identify the PLO your program assessed this academic year.

> PL 3: Students who complete the English Major will be able to articulate knowledge about diversity (in many of its facets) through examination of Multi-Ethnic and Post-Colonial/Colonial literary texts.

> PL4: Students who complete the English Major will be able to apply different theoretical frameworks to literary texts in order to produce multiple readings and interpretations.

Process

2. Identify the artifact(s) (i.e. student work) that you used to assess the PLO. [Papers, presentations, portfolios, test items, specific assignments, capstone work]

Direct Evidence:

> Faculty teaching courses designated G (Global, for PLO 3) or T (Theory, for PLO 4) were asked to describe two activities (per course) in which they identified students' "progress toward or accomplishment of the PLO." Faculty were also asked to describe, for each activity, how well the students accomplished the task. **One faculty member teaching both G & T designated courses reported assigning 2-3 page take-home short writing assignments and in-class writing measuring student achievement in diversity and theory.**

> **Update, July 18, 2016: in addition two faculty members teaching courses designated "T" reported assigning out of class writing measuring student ability to read and demonstrate student understanding of theoretical frameworks.**

3. Identify the tools (e.g. rubrics, surveys, performance on standardized test questions) used to assess the artifact(s) (i.e. student work).

> Faculty who participated reported the activities and results in brief pragraphs, entered through Formstacks, a tool the department chair learned about at the 2015 AEFIS Assessment Conference at Drexel University, and which she adapted for English Program PLO's 3 & 4 in collaboration with Richard Walsh.

Findings
4. Explain the results of the assessment activities.

PLO 3:

In AY 2015-16, the Program offered two sections of courses labeled "G" (see #2 above). In Fall 2015, of 11 students were asked to write two 2-3 page papers indicating how critical views of race/gender shaped their readings of literary texts, 10 completed the first assignment and 11 the second assignment. In each case, 6 students met all specified criteria (specific response, use of citations from literary text, citation of at least one critical text). For the in-class assignment, 9/11 students successfully identified the commonalities as well as the distinct historical, cultural, and political contexts of Native-American, African-American, Asian-American, and Latino/a communities. In Spring 2016, 12 students were asked to write two 2-page papers addressing issues of race and gender. Of 12 students writing paper #1, 5 students successfully met the criteria (including specific responses about race/gender, use of citations from literary text, citation of at least one critical text), 3 students were vague in their response, and 4 were unsuccessful. Of 11 students writing paper #2, 5 students successfully met the criteria, 4 had weak responses, and 2 did not meet the criteria.

Indirect Evidence: Of 10 students responding to a course survey, 90% gave the course the highest rating ("5") in the area, "Gained an understanding of different cultures and groups." 10% gave the course the next highest rating ("4") in the same area.

PLO #4:

In AY 2015-16, the Program offered 7 sections of courses labeled "T" (see #2 above), with 3 courses offered in F15 and 4 offered in S16. One course containing 11 students, took part in assessment.* Thus, in Fall 2015, 11 students were asked to write 2 2-3 page papers forming a specific response about how critical views shaped their understanding of different literary texts. In each case, the argument was to be informed by citation of primary and secondary sources, with the secondary sources drawing on critical/theoretical texts studied for the course. 10 students completed the first paper, with 6 meeting all criteria and 4 lacking a specific response or thesis. 11 students completed the second paper; of these, 6 met all criteria, 5 misapplied the critical/theoretical text. 11 students also completed an in-class writing assignment asking them to identify, compare and contrast the theoretical schools studied in the course; 8 students completed the assignment successfully.

*__Update, July 18, 2016: two other faculty took place in assessment, but reported their results after the previous report was submitted.__ 19 students in two classes were given different assignments measuring how well these students could incorporate different theoretical frameworks into written analysis and interpretation of literary texts. Faculty reported that 12 (8 in one class, 4 in the other) completed the assignment successfully; 4 students (2 from each class) did

not; 3 students (from one class) incorporated the frameworks, but without explicitly naming theories.

One faculty member also assigned an out of class writing assignment measuring the degree to which 10 students could read and demonstrate knowledge of different theoretical frameworks. Of these students, all achieved the goal of describing a physical structure (the Panopticon) presented in the text; asked 1) to describe the Panopticon conceptually and 2) to relate the concept to the social platforms discussed in the text, students achieved less success. Regarding conceptual description, half (5) could describe abstract concepts well, 3 made some attempt, and 2 repeated their answer for the physical description. Regarding making connections, 4 achieved mastery; 4 were competent, and 2 did not achieve the desired outcome.

5. Where applicable, outline the steps you will take to make improvements to the program based on the results of assessment activities identified in #3.

PLO #3: the faculty teaching the course decided to make some small changes (e.g., rewording prompts, spending more time teaching elements of composition such as thesis development, timing assignments so students have more time out of class to complete them), but also to structure the course so as to address social privilege and race as a social construct much earlier.

PLO #4: The faculty member teaching the assessed course decided to make changes regarding assignment timing, editing prompts, and assigning more time to teaching elements of composition.

Update, July 18, 2016: two other faculty members suggested changes including: 1) incorporating even more explicit instruction about what incorporating a theoretical framework is all about; 2) adding assignment requirements that students name theoretical frameworks explicitly; 3) establish hypothetical rhetorical situations (e.g. a blog) where students can practice explaining a theory to someone unfamiliar with it; 4) ask students to do internet research on their own before coming to class.

6. Are there any new resources needed to make program improvements? If so, please include the resources and provide justification for each in the Budget section of the Annual Report.

NO.

Year 3 (2016-17)

<u>Outcome</u>

1. Identify the PLO your program assessed this academic year.

<u>Process</u>

2. Identify the artifact(s) (i.e. student work) that you used to assess the PLO. [Papers, presentations, portfolios, test items, specific assignments, capstone work]

3. Identify the tools (e.g. rubrics, surveys, performance on standardized test questions) used to assess the artifact(s) (i.e. student work).

<u>Findings</u>

4. Explain the results of the assessment activities.

5. Where applicable, outline the steps you will take to make improvements to the program based on the results of assessment activities identified in #3.

6. Are there any new resources needed to make program improvements? If so, please include the resources and provide justification for each in the Budget section of the Annual Report.