

College: Fairmount College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

Department/Program (s): English and Creative Writing

Degree (s) Offered: B.A. and M.A. in English Language and Literature; M.F.A. in Creative Writing

Triggers: None

Brief Description of Degree Programs:

The department offers degree programs in creative writing, literature, and English teaching, as well as a range of courses in linguistics. Students who combine an English major with substantial work in other disciplines will find the knowledge and communication skills acquired in their work in English a valuable asset as they seek entrance into a wide range of fields that include communication, education, government, law, and even business.

Assessment of Learning Outcomes:

The learning outcome statements listed in the self-study (on page 9, section 3c) are limited and not tied to direct measure of student learning (grades are not considered direct measures). Likewise, for the evaluation of general education goals/skills (on page 10, section 3e) there is no direct measure of student learning, except course grades.

Placement of Graduates:

Data is provided on the undergraduate program in terms of employment, although there is no discussion on the response rate and how that data was gathered. No data is available on the two master programs.

Sources of External Support/Faculty Comments: There is a qualified faculty. Two small grants were awarded to the department in 2008 and 2009. Scholarly productivity is evident.

Conclusions:

Commendations:

- Mission and role are clearly stated and correspond to the University and College missions.
- Scholarly productivity is clear.
- Strong faculty.

By April 1, 2012 (send to the Office of the Provost):

- Efforts should be made to document that the program review process is a part of a continuous improvement approach involving all departmental faculty.
- The learning outcomes for all degree programs should be further developed and a revised assessment process needs to be implemented with the following components:

- Learning Outcomes: Statements that describe what students are expected to know and be able to do by the time of graduation. These relate to the skills, knowledge, and behaviors that students acquire through their program (e.g., graduates will demonstrate advanced writing ability).
- Assessment Methods: Direct measures used to identify, collect, and prepare data to evaluate the achievement of learning outcomes (e.g., writing project evaluated by a rubric, administering the CLA to students in the new capstone course).
- Targets: Expectations of students to achieve the desired outcome to demonstrate program effectiveness (e.g., 90% of students will demonstrate at least the benchmark performance on a writing project).
- Results: Actual achievement on each measurement (e.g., 94% of the students achieved at least the benchmark performance on the writing project).
- Analysis: An evaluation that determines the extent to which learning outcomes are being achieved and leads to decisions and actions to improve the program. The analysis and evaluation should align with specific learning outcomes and consider whether the measurement and target remain valid indicators of the learner.
- General education expectations should be further developed (and assessed) for both program majors and non-majors.
 - To measure student learning, assess a representative sample of student assignments (e.g., for writing or critical thinking abilities) using a rubric from selected courses (pre, at the beginning of semester and post, at the end).
 - Utilize processes listed above to evaluate the outcomes.

Prior to the next review in 2014:

- Data should be collected and evaluated in terms of student perceptions about the program. The University implemented an electronic undergraduate and graduate student exit survey in 2011 (by program) for this purpose.
- Data should be collected and evaluated from all program graduates to include salary, employment location, and employment in the field. The University is implementing an alumni survey (by program) for this purpose in 2012.