



SAINT LOUIS
UNIVERSITY

Saint Louis University
Program Assessment Plan

Program (Major, Minor, Core): Doctor of Philosophy

Department: English

College/School: Arts & Sciences

Person(s) Responsible for Implementing the Plan: Associate Chair, Graduate Director, and Other Assigned Faculty

Date Submitted: November 18, 2015

Program Learning Outcomes	Curriculum Mapping	Assessment Methods	Use of Assessment Data
<i>What do you expect all students who complete the program to know, or be able to do?</i>	<i>Where is the outcome learned/assessed (courses, internships, student teaching, clinical, etc.)?</i>	<i>How do students demonstrate their performance of the program learning outcomes? How does the program measure student performance? Distinguish your direct measures from indirect measures.</i>	<i>How does the program use assessment results to recognize success and "close the loop" to inform additional program improvement? How/when is this data shared, and with whom?</i>

<p>A. demonstrate a broad knowledge of literary histories, aesthetics, cultures, and emerging areas of inquiry, including an awareness of cultural diversity within literary traditions</p>	<p>Direct Assessment: This knowledge is learned throughout the student's program of study and will be directly assessed through a review of each student's written and oral doctoral qualifying examinations.</p> <p>Indirect Assessment: Each student's knowledge base will be indirectly assessed through annual faculty reporting on the wide historical array of course work the student takes during doctoral study, especially that in 6000-level seminars, as well as through relevant data from graduate course evaluations.</p>	<p>Direct Assessment: During the doctoral qualifying examinations which each Ph.D. student takes following course work and before being admitted to candidacy, the student is called up to demonstrate a broad knowledge of literary histories, aesthetics, cultures, and emerging areas of literary inquiry, including an awareness of cultural diversity issues with these literary traditions. Students respond to written questions from an examining committee of three faculty and oral questioning by five faculty, all of whom will complete a departmental rating form expressly prepared for the purpose of assessing each student's level of demonstrated knowledge acquisition.</p> <p>Indirect Assessment: Faculty reports on each student's overall academic performance, especially in seminar courses, will be shared with the student's faculty mentor, who in turn will include information about the student's acquisition of broad disciplinary knowledge in the annual student report filed with the department's director of graduate studies. Aggregated data from course evaluations bearing on Learning Objective A will also be considered.</p>	<p>Feedback on Direct Assessment: The director of graduate studies will collect and aggregate the results of the doctoral qualifying examination ratings with respect to Learning Objective A, looking for patterns of overall success as well as specific areas of relative strength or weakness. In turn, the director will report the aggregated results of student performance to the faculty at the department's annual August retreat so that recommendations for changes to our program may be considered.</p> <p>Feedback on Indirect Assessment: Annual reports from faculty mentors will form the basis both for reviewing each student's progress toward successful degree completion and for meeting Learning Objective A. The director and faculty mentor will meet individually with any student who is lagging, and larger patterns of poor performance, if identified, will be shared with a departmental faculty committee for possible recommendations which could produce revisions to our program. Such recommendations would be considered at one of the department's monthly faculty meetings.</p>
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<p>B. demonstrate proficiency in formulating written and spoken arguments situated within a historical or methodological field of study, as defined in the sections of the department's Graduate Handbook covering Ph.D. exams</p>	<p>Direct Assessment: This knowledge is learned throughout the student's program of study and will be directly assessed through a review of each student's written and oral doctoral qualifying examinations.</p>	<p>Direct Assessment: In addition to exploring a broad range of literary knowledge, the doctoral qualifying examinations which each Ph.D. student takes following course work and before being admitted to candidacy calls upon the student to drill down deeply into the material covered in one of the department's approved doctoral "tracks," many of which deal with the literature of a specific era. Students respond to track-specific written questions from an examining committee of three faculty and oral questioning by five faculty, all of whom will complete a departmental rating form expressly prepared for the purpose of assessing each student's level of demonstrated proficiency in formulating arguments within the knowledge base covered in his/her chosen track.</p>	<p>Feedback on Direct Assessment: The director of graduate studies will collect and aggregate the results of the doctoral qualifying examinations bearing on Learning Objective B, looking for patterns of overall success as well as specific areas of relative strength or weakness. In turn, the director will report the aggregated results of student performance to the faculty at the department's annual August retreat so that recommendations for changes to our program may be considered.</p>
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<p>C. demonstrate the ability to write and present papers or their equivalent within professional contexts</p>	<p>Direct Assessments: Students are challenged to develop this ability throughout their program of study. Each student's ability will be directly assessed (1) through a review of a <i>curriculum vitae</i> that lists his/her research accomplishments (papers delivered as well as research published, accepted for publication, or submitted), which is presented in each student's eighth semester in the program, and through review of a sample of submitted research if nothing has yet been published or accepted for publication, and (2) through a review of those of his/her oral presentations viewed by faculty, including work presented as part of the department's Textual Revolutions series or in other university fora.</p> <p>Indirect Assessment: A review of research presentations listed on the <i>curriculum vitae</i> but not observed as part of the assessment process will serve as indirect evidence of a student's oral presentation ability. In addition, relevant data drawn from graduate course evaluations will be gathered for analysis.</p>	<p>Direct Assessments: Research results published or accepted for publication in a peer-reviewed (or other professionally vetted) source by a student's eighth semester in the program will be regarded as meeting the written standard of Learning Objective C. Alternatively, a sample of submitted work will be reviewed and rated by a departmental faculty committee. Assessments of work orally presented before department faculty members will constitute the strongest measure of a student's oral presentation skills. Members of the faculty review committee will complete a departmental rating form expressly prepared for this purpose to assess each student's level of demonstrated success in meeting Learning Objective C.</p> <p>Indirect Assessment: On the same form, committee members will also register their reactions to research presentations listed but not observed. Aggregated data from course evaluations bearing on Learning Objective C will also be considered.</p>	<p>Feedback on Direct and Indirect Assessments: The director of graduate studies will collect and aggregate the data from the faculty committee reviews bearing on Learning Objective C, looking for patterns of overall success as well as specific areas of relative strength or weakness. In turn, the director will report the aggregated results of student performance to the faculty at the department's annual August retreat so that recommendations for changes to our program may be considered. [NOTE: For students graduating in the fifth year or beyond, the director of graduate studies will compare the publication and presentation data gathered as part of the assessment of Learning Objective F with the fourth-year data to see if students judged to be underperforming in the fourth year have generated additional evidence of meeting the presentation and writing-for-publication standards as they get closer to completing their programs of study. Such data, when aggregated, could be shared with the department faculty at one of its monthly meetings.]</p>
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<p>D. demonstrate the ability to conceptualize, develop, and bring to successful completion an original, sustained, and coherent independent research project (e.g., the dissertation) that contributes to one's field of specialization</p>	<p>Direct Assessments: While students develop this ability throughout their programs of study, the two places where the ability is usually in clearest focus is in a student's dissertation prospectus and the dissertation (or other major research project) s/he produces in pursuit of the Ph.D.</p>	<p>Direct Assessments: With the assistance of dissertation directors, the director of graduate studies will track the number of students producing approved dissertation prospecti and approved dissertations (and completing other major research projects) as well as logging those instances in which individual students are unable to successfully complete these tasks. In turn, a strenuous effort will be made to determine the reason(s) for any student's lack of success. In the knowledge that successfully concluding a project is not always the same thing as lacking the <i>ability</i> to do so, a departmental faculty committee will review every completion failure in an attempt to understand the <i>program-level</i> issues that might underlie such a result.</p>	<p>Feedback on Direct Assessments: The director of graduate studies will report the aggregated results of student performance in meeting Learning Objective D to the faculty at the department's annual August retreat so that recommendations for changes to our program may be considered, especially when the faculty review committee believes a program-level (as opposed to individual) issue may be involved.</p>
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<p>E. demonstrate the skills necessary for teaching at the undergraduate level</p>	<p>Direct Assessment: Doctoral students begin to develop their English teaching skills in ENGL 501 (The Teaching of Writing) or an equivalent course taken elsewhere, and they broaden these skills by teaching one or more 2000-level “literature” courses under the guidance of faculty mentors. The faculty’s observational reports of each student’s teaching offer direct evidence of a student teacher’s instructional skill.</p> <p>Indirect Assessments: Student course evaluations and syllabi of the courses taught offer indirect evidence.</p>	<p>Direct and Indirect Assessments: Every four years, a departmental faculty committee will review the course syllabi of each doctoral student who has taught in the department’s undergraduate program for at least two full years, as well as observational reports about and student evaluations of his/her teaching. Significant concerns registered about an individual’s teaching by the director of writing programs and/or the director of undergraduate studies will also be noted and considered, along with any corrective action(s) undertaken. Using a departmental rating form expressly designed for the purpose, committee members will then assess each student’s teaching as highly skilled, skilled, or lacking in one or more skills, which will be enumerated.</p>	<p>Feedback on Direct and Indirect Assessments: The director of graduate studies will collect and aggregate the data from the committee reviews bearing on Learning Objective E, looking for patterns of overall success as well as specific areas of relative strength or weakness. In turn, the director will report the aggregated results of student performance to the faculty at the department’s annual August retreat so that recommendations for changes to our program may be considered. [NOTE: When a serious concern about an individual student teacher’s performance is raised by the director of writing programs or the director of undergraduate programs, the director meets with that student and conveys the substance of this meeting to the director of graduate studies (and, if deemed especially serious, to the department chairperson).]</p>
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<p>F. demonstrate an ability to generate degree-appropriate job search materials</p>	<p>Direct Assessment: While various job-seeking abilities are fostered in a wide array of ways throughout a doctoral student's program of study, the portfolio that each student develops—with faculty guidance—shortly before entering the job market offers the best direct evidence of this ability. This portfolio includes a <i>curriculum vitae</i>, sample application letter(s), a research statement, a statement of teaching philosophy, and a professional writing sample.</p>	<p>Direct Assessment: Each year, the department faculty member assigned to assist students in preparing for a job search provides formal training and feedback in each of the portfolio categories. This faculty member is, in turn, aided in his/her effort by a variety of faculty who help mentor students, serve as panelists for mock interviews and job talks, and in a myriad of other ways. A departmental faculty committee will review the portfolios of every doctoral student seeking employment (both academic and "alt-ac") every fourth year, using a departmental rating form expressly developed for assessment purposes.</p>	<p>Feedback on Direct Assessment: The director of graduate studies will collect and aggregate the data from the committee reviews bearing on Learning Objective F, looking for patterns of overall success as well as specific areas of relative strength or weakness. In turn, the director will report the aggregated results of student performance to the faculty at the department's annual August retreat so that recommendations for changes to our program may be considered.</p>
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1. It is **not recommended** to try and assess (in depth) all of the program learning outcomes every semester. It is best practice to plan out when each outcome will be assessed and focus on 1 or 2 each semester/academic year. Describe the responsibilities, timeline, and the process for implementing this assessment plan.

The data needed to assess Learning Objective F may readily be collected in time to complete the assessment of this objective during the Spring 2016 semester. Accordingly, we will follow the schedule noted below during AY2015-16:

Fall 2015: (1) Submit overall assessment plan and (2) develop the requisite reporting forms for Learning Objective F and as many other reporting forms as possible.

Spring 2016: (1) Complete the development of any remaining reporting forms and (2) carry out the assessment of Learning Objective F as described above.

In AY2016-17, we will, during the Fall 2016 semester, use the Spring 2016 assessment of Learning Objective F to initiate any proposed changes to the process the department currently employs to assist job seekers. In the Spring 2017 semester, we will assess Learning Objective C.

In AY2017-18, we will, during, the Fall 2017 semester, (1) use the Spring 2017 assessment of Learning Objective C to initiate any proposed changes to the way in which the program helps students develop the ability to write research papers and to present their research within professional contexts and (2) assess Learning Objective D. In the Spring 2018 semester, we will assess Learning Objective E.

In AY2018-19, we will, during the Fall 2018 semester, use the AY2017-18 assessments of Learning Objectives D and E to initiate any proposed changes to the way in which the program helps students to successfully undertake major research initiatives and to teach, respectively. In the Spring 2019 semester, we will assess Learning Objectives A and B, and initiate a discussion of any proposed changes that follow from these assessments in the Fall of 2019.

Our current plan is to keep repeating this four-year assessment cycle thereafter, pending revision.

2. Please explain how these assessment efforts are coordinated with Madrid (courses and/or program)?

Unlike SLU's English B.A. and M.A., the doctoral program in English is not offered on the Madrid campus.

3. The program assessment plan should be developed and approved by all faculty in the department. In addition, the program assessment plan should be developed to include student input and external sources (e.g., national standards, advisory boards, employers, alumni, etc.). Describe the process through which your academic unit created this assessment plan. Include the following:

- a. Timeline regarding when or how often this plan will be reviewed and revised. (This could be aligned with program review.)
Acceptance of this document will be proposed at the department's December 2015 faculty meeting, and our current plan is to consider revisions to the assessment protocol every four years.
- b. How students were included in the process and/or how student input was gathered and incorporated into the assessment plan.
Two graduate students are on the committee that drafted this assessment protocol, and they will take the draft assessment plan to English Graduate Organization in November 2015. Proposed revisions coming out of this meeting will be considered before the document comes before the faculty in December.

- c. What external sources were consulted in the development of this assessment plan?

Association of Departments of English. "Report of the ADE Ad Hoc Committee on Assessment." New York: Modern Language Association, April 2014. Web. <https://www.ade.org/reports/adHocAssessment.pdf>

Heiland, Donna, and Laura J. Rosenthal, eds. *Literary Study, Measurement, and the Sublime: Disciplinary Assessment*. New York: Teagle, 2011. Print.

Shavelson, Richard J. *Measuring College Learning Responsibly*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 2010. Print.

Walvoord, Barbara E. *Assessment Clear and Simple: A Practical Guide for Institutions, Departments, and General Education*. 2nd ed. San Francisco: Jossey, 2010. Print.

- d. Assessment of the manageability of the plan in relation to departmental resources and personnel

The protocols outlined in this plan build upon existing departmental practices (e.g., annual reporting on students and doctoral qualifying examinations) and structures (notably, an appointed director of graduate studies, a monthly department meeting structure, and faculty service as assigned student mentors). Once this plan is put in place, there will be some extra work required of individual faculty, especially the director of graduate studies, but we have designed the protocols to be efficient as well as what we believe will be effective, rendering the increase in workload tolerable.