

Assurance of Student Learning Reflection 2024-2025

PCAL

ENGLISH

ENGLISH Masher of Arts 067

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Is this an online program? ☐ Yes ☒ No Please make sure the Program Learning Outcomes listed match those in CourseLeaf. Indicate verification here
☒ Yes, they match! (If they don't match, explain on this page under **Evaluation**)

Instructions: For the 2024-25 assessment, we are asking you to reflect on the last three-year cycle rather than collect data. It's important to take time to look over the results from the last assessment cycle and really focus on a data-informed direction going forward. In collaboration with your assessment team and program faculty, review each submitted template from 2021-2024 and consider the following for each Program Learning Outcome, add your narrative to the template, and submit the draft to your **ASL Rep** by **May 15, 2025**.

Program Student Learning Outcome 1

Program Student Learning Outcome

Literature: The student can describe the terminology, method, and practices of literary criticism.

Evaluation

Reflection Overview

The MA underwent major revisions in AY22 which reduced the required courses and opened up the completion of the MA to individual design for all but 3 hours (ENG 520, Intro to Graduate Studies). While the MA mandates that all students take a minimum of 2 literature and 2 composition courses, the courses are each student's choice, with the remaining 15 hours electives.

During the AY22 MA revision, 10 SLOs were created. The last three years of ASL reporting allowed us to proof the alignment of 6 of the 10 SLOs with their courses and measurement instruments. This reflection has allowed us an early check to tweak the revision for those alignments.

It was apparent immediately that 10 SLOs present assessment challenges: number of assessment cycles to assess all 10; disambiguating whether a deficit was a cohort issue or a programmatic one; attempting to address the issue and reassess the SLO while still assessing other SLOs.

While no plan of assessment of the 10 SLOs was included in the original revision, in AY23 we devised an assessment plan to ensure all 10 SLOs were assessed within a 5-year time frame. This plan included taking a baseline assessment of each SLO within 5 years (AY23-AY27) and establishing a reassessment schedule each subsequent year for any SLO that was not met in the previous year assessment. We also included was a remediation plan for when an SLO was not met in a given year which entailed direct engagement with the graduate faculty of the identified course(s) in which the measurement instrument was aligned and tandem to discussions with the graduate committee.

While our two years of assessment suggest that the 5-year plan is working sufficiently in assessing/re-assessing SLOs (details to follow), we have used this reflection ASL report to propose possible revision which include the value 10 SLOs. To that end, we use this report to consider which of the 10 SLOs may be redundant and/or may not be learning outcomes necessarily achievable considering the course

selection variability and individual professional goals of our MA student population.

Thus, we take this time to evaluate areas of needed improvement. From this review, we will bring the following recommendations to the faculty for consideration, vote, and, if accepted, revision.

Important- Overall Plans for Next Assessment Cycle based on this reflection:

Proposal for faculty discussion in AY26:

Reduce the 10 SLOs to 4 drawn from the current 3 Subareas--Literature, Composition, and General. This reduction will allow all SLOs to be evaluated and re-assessed, need be, within a 3-year assessment cycle, ensuring both faster comprehensive assessment and remediation. Each annual assessment period would cover either content SLOs or general SLOs. The proposed schedule would be

Year 1: General

Year 2: Literature

Year 3: Composition

In such discussions, we will have content faculty (i.e., literature or composition) discuss reducing and/or rewording SLOs related to their areas, and all graduate faculty discuss the number and rewording of the general SLOs. By ASL AY26, we will begin the new assessment cycle by assessing the new or revised general SLOs.

Rationale:

Three of the SLOs appear subsumed by another SLO within their subarea (SLO 1 by SLO 3; SLO 4 by SLO 5; SLO 7 by SLO 8).

SLO 6 is better fitted as an SLO for two composition courses and cannot be considered a program outcome given that students are not guaranteed to take those specific courses, particularly given the relaxation of mandated courses in the AY22 MA revision.

Additionally, general SLO 10 should be considered for removal since no course and, thus, no measurement instrument exists to assess this SLO.

Measurability:

All current 10 SLOs do employ a verb from Bloom's Taxonomy and are potentially measurable.

Sum:

The proposal is to keep/reword 5 of the current SLOs and remove 5 SLOs that are either subsumed by the another, are not expected for all MAs, or lacks a sufficient measurement instrument.

On SLO 1

Considering English MA students are required to take a minimum of 2 graduate-level literature courses, and many take additional literature courses, we stand by assessing the ability of MA students to demonstrate sophisticated application of literary terms within their literary analyses; however, we feel, upon review, that SLO 1 is subsumed within the expectations of SLO 3—The student can apply the terminology, methodology, and practice of literary criticism to contribute to the ongoing scholarly conversations in literary studies. For this reason, we will begin the processes to remove this SLO in our efforts to reduce the 10 SLOs to a more addressable number of 5.

Measurement Instruments	Measurement instruments are literary analysis papers sampled from across all graduate literature courses and which include one paper from every MA student enrolled in a literature course during the AY. These papers serve as the best direct assessment instrument. All courses in which student writing is the measure can be affected by the rise of AI. To address this effect, the faculty are developing conversations within their courses on valid and ethical uses of AI, continuing a process approach to paper development in which the student voice is both observed and developed by the course instructor, and exploring platforms or software for the detection of AI generated text.
Criteria & Targets	We first assessed SLO 1 in AY23, with only 22% (2 of the 9 student papers) meeting our level of performance, falling short of our 70% target. We determined several factors were in play leading to the overall unacceptable performance. Measures were taken to amend the problem: 1) conversations with the graduate literature faculty took place to ensure that expectations for sufficiently demonstrating understanding and application of literary terms, methods, and practices of literary criticism were consistently addressed in each literature course; and 2) a norming session was designed before the graduate committee was initiated before the next year's re-assessment of this SLO. In AY24, we reassessed this SLO with 80% (8 of the 10 papers assessed) meeting this SLO, with the 20% (2 of 10) achieving a developing score. We believe this SLO and our measure is sufficient.
Results & Conclusion	What stood out in the two years of assessing SLO 1 was the need for faculty conversations to gain consensus in defining expectations within course papers that demonstrated the skills to meet appropriate levels of success for this and other SLOs. Additionally, we felt the baseline assessment and re-assessment with interventions to address challenges in between SLO assessments was warranted and a promising approach. We did not find content, per se, needed to be modified, but, rather, what was needed were 1) clear guidance to the students on the incorporation of the literary terminology, 2) acknowledgement and description of methods, and/or 3) clearly defined and supported approaches to literary criticism within student papers.
<u>**IMPORTANT - Plans for Next Assessment Cycle:</u>	For SLO 1, we will: begin the department level conversation to consider removing this SLO from the course map.

Program Student Learning Outcome 2	
Program Student Learning Outcome	Literature: The student can evaluate the cultural and intellectual significance of individual works for literature.
Evaluation	Considering English MA students are required to take a minimum of 2 graduate-level literature courses, and many take additional literature courses, we stand by SLO 2 as relevant and different from the skills assessed by the current literature SLO 1 and SLO 3. Considering that the field of literature has increased its value of and focus on multi-cultural, multiethnic perspectives, we find this skill to be essential for our MA students.
Measurement Instruments	Measurement instruments are literary analysis papers sampled from across all graduate literature courses and which include one paper from every MA student enrolled in a literature course during the AY. These papers serve as the best direct assessment instrument. All courses in which student writing is the measure can be affected by the rise of AI. To address this effect, the faculty are creating student guidance and activities to teach valid and ethical uses of AI. These include developing measurement instruments in which student voice is both observed and can be developed by the course instructor. Faculty are also exploring various platforms and software to be used to detect AI generated text.

Criteria & Targets	We first assessed SLO 2 in AY23, with only 44% (4 of the 9 student papers) meeting our level of performance, falling short of our 70% target. We determined several factors were in play leading to the overall unacceptable performance. In AY24, we reassessed this SLO with only 10% (1 of the 10 papers assessed) meeting this SLO. We do not believe expectations or target levels should be changed. (see Results/Conclusion section for proposed explanation). Measures were taken to amend the problem, primarily, conversations with the graduate literature faculty are ongoing to ensure that expectations for student engagement with these topics.
Results & Conclusion	We do acknowledge that the difficulty we have in assessing this SLO arises primarily due to the measurement instrument: individual student paper topics chosen may not address cultural or intellectual significance. Additionally, certain literature courses lend themselves better to engagement with cultural and intellectual significance of individual works for literature. Still, we do expect increased engagement regarding these themes in student papers, and students can be directed to this expectation. AY23 assessment papers (i.e., courses) lent themselves to student discussions of cultural and intellectual significance of the works studied, but the second year assessment paper (AY24) either did not lend themselves as easily to do so, students were not guided to address these themes, or students simply chose not to address the topics. If this SLO remains, then we must determine how best to cover these topics in our literature courses and to convey the expectation of such topics in course papers at this level to ensure coverage in student papers.
<u>**IMPORTANT - Plans for Next Assessment Cycle:</u>	For SLO 2, we will: begin conversations with literature faculty to ensure 1) the faculty wish to emphasize these skills as essential for all MA students to acquire, and, if so, 2) that they develop agreed-upon practices across courses to ensure students demonstrate these skills within their literature papers.

Program Student Learning Outcome 3	
Program Student Learning Outcome	Literature: The student can apply the terminology, methodology, and practices of literary criticism to contribute to the ongoing scholarly conversations in literary studies.
Evaluation	Considering English MA students are required to take a minimum of 2 graduate-level literature courses, and many take additional literature courses, we stand by SLO 3 as the relevant skill assessed. Considering that the field of literature is centered on applying terminology, methodology, and practices of literary criticism, we find this skill to be the essential for our MA students. It encompasses SLO 1 and is more important than SLO 2.
Measurement Instruments	Measurement instruments are literary analysis papers sampled from across all graduate literature courses and which include one paper from every MA student enrolled in a literature course during the AY. These papers serve as the best direct assessment instrument. All courses in which student writing is the measure can be affected by the rise of AI. To address this effect, the faculty are creating student guidance and activities to teach valid and ethical uses of AI. These include developing measurement instruments in which student voice is both observed and can be developed by the course instructor. Faculty are also exploring various platforms and software to be used to detect AI generated text.
Criteria & Targets	We first assessed SLO 3 in AY23, with only 11% (1 of the 9 student papers) meeting our level of performance, falling short of our 70% target. We determined several factors were in play leading to the overall unacceptable performance.

	In AY24, we reassessed this SLO with only 80% (8 of the 10 papers assessed) meeting this SLO. We do not believe expectations or target levels should be changed.
Results & Conclusion	What stood out in the two years of assessing SLO 3 was the need for faculty conversations to gain consensus in defining expectations within course papers that demonstrated the skills to meet appropriate levels of success for this and other SLOs. Additionally, we felt the baseline assessment and re-assessment with interventions to address challenges in between SLO assessments was warranted and a promising approach. We did not find content, per se, needed to be modified, but, rather, what was needed were 1) clear guidance to the students on the acceptable practice of applying literary terminology, 2) clearly defined and supported approaches to literary criticism within student papers, and 3) a norming session for the assessors to ensure they were calibrated as to what constituted acceptable demonstrations of literary criticism within graduate student papers.
<u>**IMPORTANT - Plans for Next Assessment Cycle:</u>	For SLO 3, we will: begin conversations with literature faculty to ensure the faculty develop agreed-upon practices for graduate students across courses to ensure students demonstrate these skills within their literature papers, and begin each ASL assessment with a norming session.

Program Student Learning Outcome 4

Program Student Learning Outcome	COMPOSITION: The student can explain the principles of rhetoric using appropriate terminology.
Evaluation	We have not assessed this skill in the past 3-year cycle. This SLO was slotted to be assessed this year, AY26. Like SLO 1, we believe this Composition skill is subsumed under a subsequent SLO, namely SLO 5.
Measurement Instruments	Measurement instruments are student papers sampled from across all composition courses and which include one paper from every MA student enrolled in a composition course during the AY. These papers serve as the best direct assessment instrument. All courses in which student writing is the measure can be affected by the rise of AI. To address this effect, the faculty are creating student guidance and activities to teach valid and ethical uses of AI. These include developing measurement instruments in which student voice is both observed and can be developed by the course instructor. Faculty are also exploring various platforms and software to be used to detect AI generated text.
Criteria & Targets	Given that this SLO appears to be subsumed by SLO 5, i.e., to apply the terms correctly demonstrates an understanding of their definitions, we may wish to remove this from our list of SLOs.
Results & Conclusion	We have not assessed this SLO in the last 3 years. Upon reflection, we believe this SLO may not be necessary.
<u>**IMPORTANT - Plans for Next Assessment Cycle:</u>	For SLO 4, we will: begin the department level conversation to consider removing SLO 4 from the course map.

Program Student Learning Outcome 5

Program Student Learning Outcome	Composition: The student can construct rhetorical analyses of multiple forms of text using appropriate terminology and methodology.
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Evaluation	We have not assessed this skill in the past 3-year cycle. This SLO was slotted to be assessed this year, AY26. We do believe SLO 5 is the key student learning outcome of the Composition subsection and is, therefore, relevant.
Measurement Instruments	The direct measurement instrument for SLO 5 is a sampling of student papers from across the composition courses taught during the AY. We will proof the measurement instrument in AY26. All courses in which student writing is the measure can be affected by the rise of AI. To address this effect, the faculty are creating student guidance and activities to teach valid and ethical uses of AI. These include developing measurement instruments in which student voice is both observed and can be developed by the course instructor. Faculty are also exploring various platforms and software to be used to detect AI generated text.
Criteria & Targets	We will assess the MA student performance on SLO 5 in AY26.
Results & Conclusion	We have not assessed this SLO during the past three years. We will be able to report on the effectiveness of our assessment process and our student acquisition of this skill in AY26.
<u>**IMPORTANT - Plans for Next Assessment Cycle:</u>	For SLO 5, we will: assess this SLO in AY26.

Program Student Learning Outcome 6	
Program Student Learning Outcome	Composition: The student can describe emerging trends in digital communication and alternative publishing platforms to contribute to ongoing scholarly communications in writing studies.
Evaluation	We have not assessed SLO 6 during the last 3-year assessment cycle. If we were to access this SLO in AY26, it does employ a measurable Bloom's Taxonomy verb. However, upon this reflection, SLO 6 may not reflect a core skill that is gained by all MA students. With the revision in AY22, the individualization of the MA curriculum—choice in the two mandatory advanced composition courses along with 15 free electives—opens the possibility that MA students may not encounter the course/courses in which the trends in digital communication and/or alternative publishing platforms are addressed.
Measurement Instruments	While the measurement instrument would come from papers or other projects created within specialized courses that addressed these issues but which are not attended by all MA students, the assessment of such a select group of students seems circular and highlights this skill as not core to the MA program. Since we have not yet assessed SLO 6, we cannot speak to the overall effectiveness of the measurement instrument, but assessment options of SLO 6 does seems limited and not comprehensive to the skills expected of all MA graduates. All courses in which student writing is the measure can be affected by the rise of AI. To address this effect, the faculty are creating student guidance and activities to teach valid and ethical uses of AI. These include developing measurement instruments in which student voice is both observed and can be developed by the course instructor. Faculty are also exploring various platforms and software to be used to detect AI generated text.
Criteria & Targets	Considering our assessment of SLO 6 can only be for a select group of MA students who opt to take one or two courses, even meeting successful targets for this limited group would not accurately reflect the MA students' skills, but, rather, only test the effectiveness of this SLO for a single course and its population.
Results & Conclusion	We have not yet assessed SLO 6.

	We have no data to address this question.
<u>**IMPORTANT - Plans for Next Assessment Cycle:</u>	For SLO 6, we will: begin the department level conversation to consider removing SLO 6 from the course map.

Program Student Learning Outcome 7	
Program Student Learning Outcome	General: The student can inventory credible academic sources in the fields of literature and composition in linguistics or creative writing if applicable to the student's program of study.
Evaluation	We did a direct assessment of SLO 7 in AY22 using the papers from one of the advanced linguistics courses. Considering English MA students are required support their argument and analyses in all course papers using credible academic sources, we stand by assessing the ability of MA students to demonstrate sophisticated use of credible sources; however, we feel, upon review, that SLO 7 is subsumed within the expectations of SLO 8— The student can construct an original argument using their inventory of credible sources. For this reason, we will begin the processes to remove SLO 7 in our efforts to reduce the 10 SLOs to a more addressable number of 6.
Measurement Instruments	The use of any MA course research paper as the measurement instrument would suffice as the direct assessment of SLO 7. The rise of AI may help students compile an inventory of sources, but without careful direction, the resulting inventory may not actually consist of credible academic sources. We are less concerned of the effects of AI generated credible sources as our students are directed in courses on professional practices used. Faculty are engaged in collaborations on how best to present the ethical and valid uses of AI as we believe such platforms have identified value (e.g., topic exploration).
Criteria & Targets	We measured SLO 7 in AY22 with 100% students meeting our goals. Since this SLO was assessed using a small subset of MA students (3) in a course that most MA students do not take (ENG 408G). we do need to reassess SLO 7 using measurement instruments (papers) across MA courses to better ensure student acquisition of this skill. However, SLO 7 seems to be subsumed within SLO 8— The student can construct an original argument using their inventory of credible sources. If students can construct an original argument using credible sources, they also demonstrate their ability to inventory credible academic sources.
Results & Conclusion	Yes, we expect our graduate students can compile an inventory of credible academic sources; however, we believe they demonstrate this skill by way of SLO 8. Upon reflection, we believe this SLO may not be necessary.
<u>**IMPORTANT - Plans for Next Assessment Cycle:</u>	For SLO 7, we will: begin the department level conversation to consider removing SLO 7 from the course map.

Program Student Learning Outcome 8	
Program Student Learning Outcome	GENERAL: The student can construct an original argument using their inventory of credible sources.
Evaluation	Of the General SLO inventory, SLO 8 seems to be the most significant and relevant skill expected of all MA students.

Measurement Instruments	The use of any MA course research paper as the measurement instrument would suffice as the direct assessment of SLO 8. The rise of AI may help students compile an inventory of sources, but without careful direction, the resulting inventory may not actually consist of credible academic sources. We are less concerned of the effects of AI generated credible sources as our students are directed in courses on professional practices used. Faculty are engaged in collaborations on how best to present the ethical and valid uses of AI as we believe such platforms have identified value (e.g., topic exploration).
Criteria & Targets	We measured SLO 8 in AY22 with 100% students meeting our goals. Since this SLO was assessed using a small subset of MA students (3) in a course that most MA students do not take (ENG 408G). we do need to reassess SLO 8 using measurement instruments (papers) across MA courses to better ensure student acquisition of this skill.
Results & Conclusion	Yes, these results are expected given the degree's focus is largely proficiency in reading and writing in and about English language. No change is warranted.
<u>**IMPORTANT - Plans for Next Assessment Cycle:</u>	For SLO 8, we will: keep this SLO and the assessment protocols as stated.

Program Student Learning Outcome 9	
Program Student Learning Outcome	General: The student can demonstrate a command of written academic English and the language conventions of their subfield.
Evaluation	
Measurement Instruments	The use of any MA course research paper as the measurement instrument would suffice as the direct assessment of SLO 9. All courses in which student writing is the measure can be affected by the rise of AI. To address this effect, the faculty are creating student guidance and activities to teach valid and ethical uses of AI. These include developing measurement instruments in which student voice is both observed and can be developed by the course instructor. Faculty are also exploring various platforms and software to be used to detect AI generated text.
Criteria & Targets	We measured SLO 9 in AY22 with 100% students meeting our goals. Since this SLO was assessed using a small subset of MA students (3) in a course that most MA students do not take (ENG 408G). we would need to reassess SLO 9 using measurement instruments (papers) across MA courses to better ensure student acquisition of this skill.
Results & Conclusion	Yes, we did expect English MA graduate students have great command over academic English; however, one caveat exists. If we were to increase our international MA student pool in which students were second language speakers of English, we may see variation in proficiency and this something we need to address should our MA international student population increase. This point, however, we feel is largely moot given we have in place sufficient language score requirements for students whose first language is not English. We believe our assessment process for this SLO is sufficient. No change is warranted.
<u>**IMPORTANT - Plans for Next Assessment Cycle:</u>	For SLO 9, we will: keep this SLO and the assessment protocols as stated.

Program Student Learning Outcome 10	
Program Student Learning Outcome	General: The student can describe a 5-year plan for continuing education/professional development appropriate to the English profession.
Evaluation	We assessed this SLO in AY24. We do not believe this learning outcome is relevant to the program assessment, and plan to propose its elimination.
Measurement Instruments	In AY24, we used reflective essays from ENG 520, Introduction to Graduate studies. We expected this would be a direct measure of the students' articulation of their plan for their degree and its professional application. We did not find this artifact to be appropriate. We simply do not see this as an SLO relevant to the sum of the meaningfulness of the MA program considering students may be exploring professional options as they matriculate through courses.
Criteria & Targets	In AY24, 27% (3/11) of student reflections expressed a professional plan. Moving through the newly adopted SLOs (AY22), we find this SLO inconsequential to the success of our students and their inability to articulate a plan unnecessary.
Results & Conclusion	It is unclear in what course or what measurement instrument was intended to be used to measure this SLO when the program was revised in AY22. While we had meetings with the faculty who taught the ENG 520 with explicit directions for students (AY25) to address their plan, so we could re-assess this SLO in AY25, we find this step to be problematic and, instead, will propose eliminating this SLO.
**IMPORTANT - Plans for Next Assessment Cycle:	For SLO 10, we will: begin the department level conversation to remove this SLO from the course map.