

## English Outcomes Assessment Examples

University of South Carolina at Aiken

<http://assess.usca.sc.edu/ira/assessment/ENGFormA.htm>

### **B. A. in English**

#### Mission:

The B. A. in English is designed to provide majors with background for graduate studies in English or preparation for careers that draw on communication skills and critical thinking abilities.

This mission is directly supportive of the first and third parts of the collective mission of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, which assert that the six departments in the College "provide students throughout the University with experiences in thinking creatively and critically and in communicating effectively both ideas and creative impulses" and "provide baccalaureate degree programs." The College mission, in turn, reinforces the campus mission statement, particularly in the references to how USCA encourages "thinking critically and analytically, questioning, searching out concepts"; "communicating effectively using verbal...systems"; "exploring values opening and critically"; and "developing depth of knowledge within chosen fields of interest."

#### Goals:

The Department has established the following goals for those students who have completed the B. A. in English:

- 1.) a general comprehension of literature as a means of understanding the human condition;
- 2.) a general knowledge of the major movements, periods, and authors in British and American literature;
- 3.) a general understanding of language as a medium of human expression;
- 4.) a working knowledge of literary terms;
- 5.) a working knowledge of the major reference tools for the discipline;
- 6.) the ability to think and write critically about literature, including the following skills:
  - 6.1) the ability to do a close reading of all genres,
  - 6.2) the ability to place a specific work in the context of the writer's canon,
  - 6.3) the ability to place a writer's work in the context of the literary tradition,
  - 6.4) the ability to understand literature in its cultural context,
  - 6.5) the ability to read, understand, and apply literary criticism and scholarship;and
- 7.) the ability to think creatively and write articulately about ideas in general.

The Department of English has adopted the following policy regarding the basic use of computers by those students pursuing the B. A. in English.

All English majors must demonstrate mastery of electronic databases. Competency will be demonstrated by satisfactory compilation, evaluation, and integration of electronic sources in researched writing.

University of Colorado at Boulder

<http://www.colorado.edu/pba/outcomes/units/engl.htm>

[Knowledge and skill goals](#) for this undergraduate degree program are recorded in the most recent CU-Boulder catalog.

In some summaries of assessment activity, goals are referred to by number (e.g., K-2 is knowledge goal 2).

[Assessment 2002](#)

[Assessment 1998 and earlier](#)

### **Outcomes Assessment 2002**

At the end of the spring semester 2002, the English department generated a random list of students taking our introductory course for the major, English 2000: Literary Analysis, and students taking our capstone course for the major, English 4038: Critical Thinking. We then asked the instructors of these courses to provide us with the final essays from the randomly selected students in these classes. The essays were copied and sent to an external evaluator, Dr. Jordan Landry, assistant professor of English at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, who was asked to read the essays and write a summary assessing the development of skills and concepts that the English major emphasizes; these include the ability to close-read and interpret passages of literature, to use ideas and concepts from a variety of schools of literary theory to analyze literature, to recognize historical trends, tropes, forms of figurative language, and to write clear and insightful analyses of literary works. Dr. Landry's summary, and her comments on the individual essays, follow, and constitute our outcomes report for AY 01-02.

#### **Dr. Landry's report:**

In evaluating the 2000 "Literary Analysis" final assignments for basic skills and the 4038 "Critical Thinking" papers for synthetic thinking, I found that both groups had mastered the skills demanded of them. In comparing the two sets of assignments (one set at the 2000 level and one at the 4000), I could see measurable improvement in the "Critical Thinking" papers, as even the papers with the most difficulties still showed sophisticated knowledge about literature's form and function. Indeed, each paper at the 4000 level had an ambitious design even when that ambitious plan could not be implemented within the paper. The majority of papers written at this level demonstrated knowledge of theory, working, implicitly or explicitly, with such issues as ideology, multivalency, binary

oppositions, and subjectivity. Since students did not always reference a specific theoretical tack, this display of mastery signals that they have ingested this knowledge at such a fundamental level that it has become fully integrated into their writing repertoire. Along with knowledge of theory, the majority of 4038 papers showed an advanced ability to engage in analogical thinking and critical analysis. The ways in which these modes of thinking manifest within the papers as a whole suggest the students in the English Department will carry these skills with them into their future work, whatever that might be. If these student essays are representative, then, the clear emphasis on critical theory and analysis at University of Colorado at Boulder (UCB) is encouraging students not only to think for themselves and apply their findings to texts, but to do so at a sophisticated level.

At the 2000 level, the responses to exam questions were impressive when students were asked direct questions about poetic meter and meaning. [Student A]'s and [Student B]'s final examinations for Literary Analysis show an exceptional understanding of poetic terms and meter. In turn, these particular students' exams are absolute models for what professors might demand (and receive) from their students: the students showed an ability to move easily from discussion of the sonnet form to close reading of particular stanzas to definition of poetic terms such as personification and blank verse. Students showed skill, although considerably less, at responding to questions on essay exams. My sense is this difference stems from students' propensity to move to broad discussions on essay exams. In each of the exams evaluated at this level, there was at least one essay that discussed the literary text so broadly that the interpretation could have applied to innumerable other texts. Yet, tendency toward the general was balanced by a demonstrated knowledge of symbol and metaphor, literature as a tension between the individual and collectivity, and literary language as capable of influencing readers and shaping perception. [Student C]'s ability to discuss Stephen Crane's *The Monster* as a text in which "the communities [sic] refusal to act, resulted in not only Henry's disfiguration, but also in a collective guilt that the community felt" certainly speaks to a level of instruction that challenges students to think creatively and urges them to see complex relationships at work within the text. Among the papers evaluated at this level, there are the usual examples of papers that lack a thesis and, thus, wander in their discussion throughout the paper (see my more specific comments on [Student D]'s paper) and those that dwell on summary and description of the text without moving much beyond it ([Student E]'s paper). Both these papers were also hampered by repetitiveness and grammatical mistakes. Yet, these are all common pitfalls of undergraduate papers at the 2000 level, and the difficulty these students faced in their writing is hardly surprising. More surprising was the passion, complexity, and maturity at play in two 2000 level papers on *W;t*. Since both students' papers on the play deal with Cartesian dualism, it is obvious that classes were dedicated to discussion of this topic. Yet, both students use the theory to advance their own unique arguments. [Student F] writes, "Dualism is introduced into the play right from the title, where Edson uses a semicolon in the

spelling of "wit"...By inserting a semicolon into this word, the author shows that the dualistic ideas of wit ('profound seriousness' and 'light playfulness') should be juxtaposed and joined, opening the reader up to integration of the mind and body." Similarly, [Student G] discusses why Cartesian dualism provides reassurance for the main character: "The concept of dualism serves as a source of comfort for her, because she can believe that her mind will not be affected by the deterioration of her body." While, most likely, both [Student F] and [Student G] brought writing abilities with them into the "Literary Analysis" course, their essays show that they were inspired by classroom discussions and their rapport with the professor to strive for excellence in their writing. To be able to inspire students to their best work and challenge them to complicate their thinking in this way is a testimony to exceptional instruction. This kind of dedication was noticeable in many sections of the "Literary Analysis" course as written exchanges between students and professors on assignments conveyed a sense of professors' commitment to helping students improve their work and students' interest in such improvement.

At the 4000 level, students showed a noticeable improvement in their ability to develop their ideas in original and complex ways and to bring secondary texts to bear on primary ones. One of the most impressive aspects of this batch of papers is students' willingness to take on incredibly ambitious writing projects, ones which demand advanced skills in critical thinking, application of theory, and synthesis of ideas. If any of these students go on to graduate work, as is likely, then, they will have already tackled dissertation-worthy topics. Such ambitious essays suggest that classroom discussion has generated enthusiasm and inspired ideas in students. This level of enthusiasm among students also speaks to significant support for English majors being provided by professors and a sense of rapport between English majors and professors.

Not surprisingly though, students' high aims for their papers often hamper the production of a well-written, well-organized, and well-argued paper. In a number of students' papers such as [Student H]'s, [Student I]'s, [Student J]'s, and [Student K]'s, some basic requirements of an effective essay (provision of adequate proof, explication of quotes, avoidance of overgeneralizations, and development of a focused thesis) are forgotten in the pursuit of the higher goals of mastering theory, making broad claims for the significance of their findings, and tying the text to broader socio-historical contexts. My own sense is that, as students strive for the next level in writing and shift their emphasis to sustained critical analysis, skills that were mastered earlier in their careers suffer somewhat. In these essays, students are experimenting with critical theory and literary texts, challenging themselves about what might be seen in and said about literature. Such reaching is crucial to developing higher skill levels in literary criticism. So, I think that it's commendable that professors are guiding their students to that next skill level. Too, the momentary loss of skills could easily be countered with re-writes. Through re-writes where students could go back and

adjust their focus to those earlier skills, students would achieve a much more integrated essay with all the necessary skills intact.

In conclusion, I would say that English majors at UCB are being well prepared to think critically for themselves. As a whole, these majors write at a sophisticated level. The reviews written for the 4038 course in drama provide concrete evidence of the ways in which students' skills improve over the course of their careers as English majors. While certainly impressive for their level, the 2000 "Critical Analysis" exams on poetry only conveyed students' ability to analyze the poem and define poetic terms. In striking contrast, the final assignments at the 4000 level present students' ability to move well beyond interpretation of meaning and definition of terms. They also prove the students' recognition of the ways in which the director attempts to manipulate the audience's experience of the text, ability to evaluate the dynamics between characters on the stage and between audience and characters, knowledge of what one theater style means vis-à-vis another, and awareness of how criticism can affect future performances of plays. In other words, by their senior year, English majors have learned to take their knowledge about literature and apply it in innumerable ways. I commend UCB's English Department for the success they enjoy in guiding students to this level of improvement.

### **Evaluation of Individual Essays:**

[Student C]:

She shows a consistent sense of the tension between the individual and the collectivity, the active and the passive, and individual desires and societal demands that are so fundamental to narrative. Her discussion of the town's collective guilt in Stephen Crane's *The Monster* and its desire to punish the hero precisely because he acted when they didn't demonstrates attunement to how the unconscious is at work in texts. Tackling *You Can't Take It With You*, she reads the character Grandpa as championing commencement ceremonies as gateways to creative independence and scorning the payment of taxes as a route to becoming an automaton, thereby, revealing a thorough understanding of literature's tendency to privilege the unconventional over the conventional. Altogether, these ideas are complex, nuanced, and mature. Grade: A.

[Student E]:

Her rewrite of her paper "The Search for Acceptance" has serious difficulties. Her opening paragraph is not only oblique but garbled: "Both characters are affected by this pessimistic outlook of appearance, and go to great lengths to address the problem they are being faced with. Finding the source of their problem however, only creates greater complexity, and leaves a greater problem in the end [sic for the entire quote]." Further, frequently her way of implementing language makes it sound as if she's arguing one side of the issue, when she, in fact, is arguing the other side: "The issue of race causes self-hatred...Although Tom is an educated man, his heritage automatically places the badge of degradation upon him." In

this way, [Student E] has difficulty with establishing a distinction between her own opinion about race, the text's representation of race, and the author's view of race. Lack of paragraph development mars the paper throughout, as the majority of paragraphs are only four sentences in length. This lack of development prevents [Student E] from reaching deeper insights about the text. Grade: C.

[Student E]:

[Student E]'s exam is even worse. She shows little knowledge about slavery except what one might guess at (slavery was bad; slavery was a fraught issue in America). She comes to the easiest conclusions about Emily Dickinson's "I felt a funeral in my Brain" as well as Crane's *The Monster*. Grade: C-.

[Student F]:

What I have to say about [Student F]'s work is "WOW!" It's everything an English professor dreams of in their students' papers: richness of vocabulary, close readings with moments that show a clear relation between the student's creative reading and the author's words, provocative insights that reach beyond the obvious, seamless movement between ideas, sheer cleverness, and an overall critique of Cartesian dualism. Grade: A+

[Student B]:

That students can even pass an exam that gives small clips from a poem and asks students to explain their meaning (in the larger context of the poem) is remarkable. That they can brilliantly answer these questions testifies to the intensive preparation of them by the instructor and his/her confidence that students can excel when challenged appropriately. Clearly, the students have not only learned to read poetry but to delight in it. [Student B] provides a brilliant reading of *Ozymandias* both in terms of its meaning and how it both conforms to and departs from the sonnet form. His readings are altogether impressive, particularly for such a challenging exam that demands both breadth and depth of knowledge. Grade: A+.

[Student A]:

Like [Student B], [Student A] is able to move easily from Eliot to Hopkins to Shakespeare and explicate their poems in fine style as she goes. To even understand the questions, students need to know definitions of "irony," satire, "tenor," and "personification." I would consider students having that knowledge a coup in itself. That students go beyond that to actually revealing how these concepts are at work in a particular poem and how they add to the poem's meaning is nothing short of amazing. A general complaint that abounds in English departments is that students do not test well. This professor not only puts the lie to that but also reveals the full extent of students' ability to fathom the form and function of poetic devices. Grade: A.

[Student L]:

While [Student L] certainly knows how to wield language, in answering the first

essay question on the exam, she does so only to obscure the fact that she knows little about her subject. Her phrases could apply to a good deal of poetry: "The images are intricate and they are also esoteric. One realizes that indeed there is an incredible amount of detail within each metaphor, even though he [sic] might not fully comprehend its imagnetic [sic] function. She speaks of intricacies in nature that go beyond a human scope of immediate understanding." Language is employed here in order avoid committing to saying anything specific. While not having a command of the idea of metaphor in poetry, [Student L] reveals an ability to read metaphor in fiction. Indeed, she unknots an intricate metaphor in *The Awakening*, showing how "the 'pigeon' part represents freedom and the 'house' represents confinement." Grade: B.

[Student M]:

[Student M] takes on a difficult topic: the subtextual encoding of homosexual desire in Katherine Mansfield's *Her First Ball*. Unfortunately, [Student M]'s outside reading on Mansfield in Lillian Faderman's *Chloe Plus Olivia* actually restricts her readings as she tries to find ways in which Faderman's interpretation of Mansfield's life is reflected in the story. In this way, she tries to find a direct translation of the author's life in the text. Given this tack as well as her treatment of the text in sequential fashion, [Student M] also becomes trapped in summary and description often. For a 2000-level paper though, her essay demonstrates highly developed skills in close reading. Too, quotes are used provocatively to capture the conflict between the individual and society at work in the text. Grade: B.

[Student D]:

The essay as a whole wanders vaguely from one idea to another because it lacks a thesis to organize it. Awful overgeneralizations are made about the experiences of Vietnam veterans after they return to the U.S. from their tour of duty. Overall, the paper memorializes many of undergraduate students' most common errors: the opening paragraph admits that [Student D] had difficulty connecting with other stories read in class, "The American Heritage Dictionary" is the predominant source of reference used in the paper, "I" is used in a way that foregrounds [Student D]'s confusion about the text ("I found the sound, form, and diction of this story to be peculiar), and easy conclusions are reached (the title "Out of Place" "refer[s] to problems ex-soldiers had upon returning home from war"). Grade: C-.

[Student G]:

If [Student D]'s essay is a compilation of students' worst mistakes, [Student G]'s essay is a model of everything English majors are capable of achieving. Even as her essay relies on class discussion, she uses it only as a springboard to arrive at a highly original thesis: Margaret Edson reveals that her main character Vivian must achieve mind/body unity in order to cope with death. Overall, the paper explores the detachment from the body so often prevalent in academic studies, and analyzes its consequences as represented in the play: isolation,

disassociation, a false sense of control, and an inability to accept the process of dying. Along the way, [Student G] makes provocative points and illuminates the play's meaning. Grade: A.

### **Individual Evaluations of 4038 Assignments:**

[Student N]:

This set of response papers reveals a sophisticated understanding of the relationship between body, mind, skin color, ethnicity, and class. Her approach to texts demonstrates an informed sense of how authors use language for political purposes. Again and again, the complex workings of the text, such as its stance on the relationship between public perceptions of race and private experience of it, are unveiled in skilled ways that illuminate the author's work. Grade: A.

[Student O]:

This paper tries to use James F. Masterson's *The Search for the Real Self* to read Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*. The plan is an ambitious one as it aims to reveal the ways that Celie changes familiar conventional patterns through creative expression. The problem is that [Student O] identifies such activities as Celie's making curtains, cleaning, and sewing as the height of creativity without acknowledging that these chores have traditionally been seen as simply women's standard work. Since these chores have long been considered women's work, [Student O] needs to explain explicitly how Celie's enactment of them is creative. In other words, what about these activities does Celie change? Even so, the argument shows a fine understanding of symbols and character development. And, [Student O] has moments in which she reveals a highly developed ability to analyze critically and creatively such as when she reads Celie's sewing of pants as a re-gendering of herself and, thereby, as a form of claiming individual power. Grade: B.

[Student P]:

This paper shows a fine comprehension of the relationship between dominant ideals and individual bodies as well as a mastery of Foucault's basic ideas about how power becomes wielded over the individual through daily habits. At times, the paper suffers from a propensity to move quickly from one idea to another without gradually developing and explaining the significance of each idea. So, for example, [Student P] argues that Claudia in *The Bluest Eye* moves from destroying white dolls in order to discover what constitutes them to tearing them apart without reason. While this understanding of movement in the text is in itself a sign of [Student P]'s analytical skills, his essay begs for some further explication of this shift. Grade: A-.

[Student Q]:

[Student Q] uses one Chicano's poem to criticize a 1960s call for revolution by Chicanos. The problem is that [Student Q] assumes that one text is "real" (the

poem "22 Miles") in the sense that it captures objective reality accurately and that one text is unreal (the call for revolution "El Plan Espiritual de Atzlan") in the sense that it imagines a world that can never be. This approach hampers him because he often assumes that the poem "22 Miles" does not need to be unpacked, given that it is the "real." In this way, [Student Q] gives a broad-based view of both the poem and the call for revolution. Too, little evidence is provided to bolster [Student Q]'s argument. Grade: If actual paper: C; if response paper: B.

[Student H]:

This paper tackles Asian American, African American, and Chicana poets and their poetry. And, it is just this breadth that hinders the paper as a whole. Since [Student H] works to show distinctions between these three groups, she treads close to stereotyping groups (Asian American women poets' "voice appears extremely delicate in their poetry" and expresses no anger. While Asian American and African American female poets express longing to be accepted by white American culture, Latina poets do not). Unity within the paper is also a difficulty as, with each shift to a different racial group, [Student H] submits wholly different findings. Still, moments of deep brilliance shine through here as she is particularly attuned to ethnic women's silencing and, when she narrows her focus to close read the poems, she shows highly developed analytical skills. With a narrower focus and additional close readings added to the essay, [Student H]'s work would most likely be exceptional. Grade: B-/C+

[Student R]:

[Student R] creates a brilliant paper showing the inversion of roles between Gregor and Grete in Kafka's *Metamorphosis*. She uses quotes productively and shows the reader what she expects them to see in the quotes. The reading here is informed by feminist analysis, and, concepts of passive/active, gender roles, and separate spheres complicate the writing in the essay. The main drawback of the paper could easily be fixed with a re-write and direction: the majority of sentences here begins with names/pronouns and passive verbs predominate. Such a drawback though is easily overcome. What [Student R] does have command over are much more difficult elements of writing to master: creative interpretation of the text, deep analogical thinking (such as the connections made between the family's lodgers and the family itself), and a smart theoretical approach to the text. Grade: A.

[Student S]:

This paper comes to easy conclusions about Kafka's *Metamorphosis*. It would benefit overall from digging deeper about the meaning of quotes and grappling with issues such as gender norms and their power. His basic finding is that Grete becomes male and Gregor female (there's no distinction made between sex and gender in the paper). According to [Student S], both characters become angry in these new-found roles. Such a point is provocative and captures the reader's imagination. Yet, the paper does not follow up on this point, revealing why changing roles releases anger. Too, his proof reading is sloppy, but provides

some comic moments such as "he has to depend for other pope for everything he needs" and Gregor's worth within the family is one dement ional." Grade: B-.

[Student I]:

[Student I] tries to deal with very sophisticated ideas but falls short in the thesis, concluding basically that Kafka's language is multivalent. It is perhaps the very high goal that [Student I] sets in the paper that leads him into protracted discussion of infinite readings themselves without showing how such multivalency manifests in Kafka's *The Trial*. [Student I] quotes widely from 20<sup>th</sup>-century critics, and, so, demonstrates an incredible breadth of knowledge. [Student I] also shows a command of theory, an understanding of the purpose of literature, and a highly developed sense of the process of reading itself. While some finer points like the need to present evidence to prove the argument are lacking here, the ambition of the essay is impressive and explains most of the paper's pitfalls. Grade: B+.

[Student T]:

Her paper shows that she has integrated some very complex ideas from class into her overall knowledge: she clearly understands the effect negative authority figures have on those they control and the paradoxical way in which the treatment of beings as if they are monsters actually works to construct them as monsters. Yet, [Student T] has a limited ability to advance her argument about these ideas. Her quotes rarely support her argument, and the quotes are not explained, even though the instructor clearly gives these particular instructions in the handout on the assignment. Sentence, verb, and subject variety is also missing here. There is also a fundamental imbalance in the essay: the paper tends to favor the novel *Frankenstein* with only brief allusions to the three other texts that she's working with. Grade: C.

[Student J]:

[Student J]'s paper begins by trying to employ Freudian ideas of the repressed and uncanny to read images of Dr. Moreau's and Frankenstein's reactions to their creations. His paper topic is ambitious, revealing both a passion for his topic and inspiration from the professor. He comes on strong in his analysis of Dr. Moreaus' indifference to the uncanny. Here, his reading is provocative and highly creative. The paper overall though is bogged down with vague biographical readings of Shelley's life, a broad unfocused thesis, and an underdeveloped argument about why Victor represses his fear as he is creating the monster. Overall, [Student J] has complex ideas and a strong understanding of some of Freud's theories, but encounters difficulty implementing them well at times. Grade: B/B-.

[Student U]:

From the start, [Student U] is in command of her material. She shows not only a knowledge of binaries and deconstruction, but wields these concepts originally and interestingly. Her sentence structure is varied and her vocabulary rich: "By

presenting to their readers humanlike beasts and beastly humans, Shelley and Wells beckon a reconsideration of the human-beast dichotomy that governs society." While hampered a bit by leaving quotes unexplained and not presenting the best evidence at times, [Student U] still achieves an overall depth in her interpretation and reveals a profound knowledge of the skills of close reading and critical thinking. Grade: A.

[Student K]:

[Student K]'s unexpected title "Candidates for the Jerry Springer Show" heightened my expectations for her paper. And, there was much to like about it. She clearly recognized the ways in which both *Mimic* and *The Island of Dr. Moreau* use the theme of the family as their basic structure. Vast overgeneralizations though about both the 1990s and 1950s riddle the paper. Too, the assumptions about what make a family successful are somewhat disturbing as [Student K], perhaps unintentionally, suggests that single-parent households where women are in charge bring about chaos. Yet, there are brilliant points made here too, such as the recognition that the "mother" in *Mimic* is "punished" until she embraces the traditional role in a nuclear family. Grade: B+ as is. A- if she re-submitted with the overgeneralizations deleted.

[Student V]:

[Student V]'s reviews of other students' performances of plays in class demonstrate an incredible range of knowledge about theater. Her writing reveals a subtle understanding of the performance of a play as a way of transmitting the director's interpretation of the play. [Student V] reveals her knowledge of different styles of theatre and their purpose in relationship to the audience. Her work though needs a thorough proof reading, particularly since she repeatedly pronounces her peers' work to be "very clever." Also, while she conveys her sense of whether the choices in performing the play were "appropriate," she often does not explain what those choices mean. Grade: A-.

[Student W]:

While the assignment called for students not only to evaluate their fellow students' performance but also to give them alternative suggestions for how the play might be performed, [Student W]'s series of reviews does not provide the latter suggestions. [Student W] does show knowledge of various theater styles and awareness of the actors' relationship with the audience. The language overall though is simple ("I think" and "I like") and, even so, garbled ("From some perspective you couldn't be anymore different that black and white"). Grade: C.

[Student X]:

[Student X]'s reviews show a thorough knowledge of dramatic terms and recognizes them when performed. In watching other plays, she was attuned to space, the type of theater, the relationship between characters and characters and audience, props, and lighting. Grade: A.

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Course Catalog Objectives - <http://www.colorado.edu/sacs/catalog03-04/cs.html?s=2-27>

### **Degrees - BA, MA, PhD**

The undergraduate degree in English emphasizes knowledge and awareness of:

- canonical and noncanonical works of English and American literature;
- the general outlines of the history of British and American literature;
- literary theories, including recent theoretical developments; and
- the social and historical contexts in which the traditions developed.

In addition, students completing the degree in English are expected to acquire the ability and skills to:

- analyze literary texts;
- interpret texts on the basis of such analysis;
- relate analyses and interpretations of different texts to one another; and
- communicate such interpretations competently in written form.

The undergraduate degree in creative writing emphasizes knowledge and awareness of:

- literary works, including the genres of fiction, poetry, playwriting, and screenwriting, and the major texts of contemporary writers;
- literary history, including the origins and development of genres, major writers of the past, and the role of the writer in society; and
- literary analysis, including theories of literary composition and critical theory.

In addition, students completing the degree in creative writing are expected to acquire the ability and skills to:

- write in different poetic modes and styles;
- write in various fictive styles; and
- evaluate other students' written work.

**Please choose from one of the following subsections:**

- [Bachelor's Degree Programs](#)
- [Graduate Degree Programs](#)

Texas A&M

<http://assessment.tamu.edu/Englishproposal.pdf>

Outcome #1:

Students will demonstrate proficiency in research as evaluated by the research rubric derived from the expectations set out by the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers.

Assessment Methods for Outcome #1:

Research faculty, who teach the capstone courses required of all majors, assisted in the develop of a “research rubric” derived from the expectations set out by the Modern Language Association in its

MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition – the bible of the discipline. All professors teaching senior seminars in the fall term of 2003 will use the resulting ten-question rubric to evaluate the research writing of their students.

Criteria for Success for Outcome #1:

The overall average of the student performance measured by the new research rubric will be at least

80 percent, and the overall performance on each of the ten items analyzed will be at least 80 percent.

Intended Use of Assessment Results for Outcome #1:

The results will be reported out to the English faculty as a whole and to the individual instructors participating in the trial application along with information on class demographics (such as, the number of English majors, English minors, and others) item-by-item and comparatively by section. The data should encourage reflection and possible adjustment in how research will be taught in future classes.