

B.A. in English Five-Year Assessment Plan 2011

John Jay College of Criminal Justice

Mission Statement of the B.A. in English

The mission of John Jay College's B.A. in English is to acquaint students with a diverse range of literary texts and their historical, cultural, and aesthetic contexts; to introduce students to some of the principal critical and scholarly approaches to the study of texts; to establish a foundation for thinking about literature and law as text-based narratives subject to interpretation; and to help students develop the ability to read perceptively, think critically, and write effectively.

Learning Goals of B.A. in English

1. Student reads a text closely, paying attention to the significance of words, syntax, and their contribution to the meaning of the text as a whole.
2. Student identifies the key elements and terms of literature, such as tone, form, point of view, figurative language, and plot structure in their analysis of literature.
3. Student shows awareness of a given genre and its conventions within a historical context.
4. Student appropriately uses secondary and theoretical sources in support of literary analysis.
5. Student writes critically on literature, including setting up a thesis, incorporating textual evidence, writing a coherent argument, and citing sources correctly according to a standardized format.
6. Student produces a paper that is edited for clarity and grammatical correctness.

English Major

Link Between Program Learning Objectives and Courses Learning Objectives

Courses	Program Learning Objectives					
	1 CLOSE READING: 1. Student reads a text closely, paying attention to the significance of words, syntax, and their contribution to the meaning of the text as a whole.	2 ELEMENTS AND TERMS OF LITERATURE: 2. Student identifies the key elements and terms of literature, such as tone, form, point of view, figurative language, and plot structure in their analysis of literature.	3 GENRE: Student shows awareness of a given genre and its conventions within a historical context.	4 LITERARY INTERPRETATION: Student appropriately uses secondary and theoretical sources in support of literary analysis.	5 WRITING FOR LITERATURE: Student writes critically on literature, including setting up a thesis, incorporating textual evidence, writing a coherent argument, and citing sources correctly according to a standardized format.	6 EDITING: Student produces a paper that is edited for clarity and grammatical correctness.
	Course Learning Objective	Course Learning Objective	Course Learning Objective	Course Learning Objective	Course Learning Objective	Course Learning Objective
LIT 260 Introduction to Literary Study	Identify and interpret literary language in its verbal and syntactical complexity.	Identify elements and terms of literature, such as tone, point of view, figurative language, plot structure, etc.	Know what it means for an author to write in a given genre, the distinctive elements of a genre, and how they develop over time	Scan poetry; learn to read poetry for meter, rhyme, and sound.	Learn the essential elements of a critical essay on literature: setting up a thesis, incorporating evidence, writing an argument, & citing sources	Learn strategies for editing and proofreading; identify areas of weakness in one's grammar and understand and apply correct usage.
LIT 300 Text and Context	Recognize the theoretical underpinnings of any act of reading	Use literary devices; recognize their own subject positions as readers and writers, to see themselves as members of a community of writers in a specific discipline	Learn to understand the methods, concepts, goals and underlying assumptions of specific modes of literary criticism	Learn to employ particular theoretical frameworks and literary criticism in the concrete practice of reading and writing about literary texts	Recognize and strengthen authorial voice in dialogue with others.	Practice strategies for editing and proofreading; review areas of weakness in one's grammar and understand and apply correct usage.
LIT 305 Foundations of Literature and Law	Demonstrate critical interpretation of required readings: literature as a critique of law, literature as a discourse of imaginative reconstruction, rhetoric, storytelling, and interpretation in literature and the law	Learn basic vocabulary and critical issues in the field of literature and the law	Identify key differences between literary and legal discourses	Understand legal implications of literary strategies and narratives and literary implications of legal narrative	Construct arguments that compare narrative and factual elements of literature and law	Practice strategies for editing and proofreading; review areas of weakness in one's grammar and understand and apply correct usage.

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LIT 370 Topics in Ancient Literature	Course Learning Objective Students will be able to understand, interpret and respond in writing to the formal, historical and thematic components of literary texts.	Course Learning Objective Identify one or more of the major themes, forms, and authors of ancient literature	Course Learning Objective understand one or more genres common to ancient literature	Course Learning Objective	Course Learning Objective practice rhetorical and argumentative skills and ability to incorporate textual evidence.	Course Learning Objective Practice strategies for editing and proofreading; review areas of weakness in one's grammar and understand and apply correct
LIT 371 Topics in Medieval Literature	Students will be able to understand, interpret and respond in writing to the formal, historical and thematic components of literary texts.	identify one or more of the major themes, forms, and authors of the medieval period	understand one or more literary genres common to the medieval period		practice rhetorical and argumentative skills and ability to incorporate textual evidence	Practice strategies for editing and proofreading; review areas of weakness in one's grammar and understand and apply correct usage.
LIT 372 Topics in Early Modern Literature	Students will be able to understand, interpret and respond in writing to the formal, historical and thematic components of literary texts.	Identify one or more of the major ideas, literary genres, and authors of the early modern period.	understand one or more of the literary genres popular in early modern period.		practice rhetorical and argumentative skills and ability to incorporate textual evidence.	Practice strategies for editing and proofreading; review areas of weakness in one's grammar and understand and apply correct usage.
LIT 373 Topics in 17th-18th Century Literature	Students will be able to understand, interpret and respond in writing to the formal, historical and thematic components of literary texts.	Identify one or more of the major ideas, literary genres, and authors of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries	understand one or more of the literary genres common to 17th 18th century literature		practice rhetorical and argumentative skills and ability to incorporate textual evidence.	Practice strategies for editing and proofreading; review areas of weakness in one's grammar and understand and apply correct usage.

	Program Learning Objectives					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Courses	CLOSE READING: 1. Student reads a text closely, paying attention to the significance of words, syntax, and their contribution to the meaning of the text as a whole.	ELEMENTS AND TERMS OF LITERATURE: 2. Student identifies the key elements and terms of literature, such as tone, form, point of view, figurative language, and plot structure in their analysis of literature.	GENRE: Student shows awareness of a given genre and its conventions within a historical context.	LITERARY INTERPRETATION: Student appropriately uses secondary and theoretical sources in support of literary analysis.	WRITING FOR LITERATURE: Student writes critically on literature, including setting up a thesis, incorporating textual evidence, writing a coherent argument, and citing sources correctly according to a standardized format.	EDITING: Student produces a paper that is edited for clarity and grammatical correctness.
	Course Learning Objective	Course Learning Objective	Course Learning Objective	Course Learning Objective	Course Learning Objective	Course Learning Objective
LIT 374 Topics in Nineteenth- Century Literature	Students will be able to understand, interpret and respond in writing to the formal, historical and thematic components of literary texts.	Identify one or more of the major ideas, literary genres, and authors of the nineteenth century	understand one or more literary genres common to the nineteenth century		practice rhetorical and argumentative skills and ability to incorporate textual evidence.	Practice strategies for editing and proofreading; review areas of weakness in one's grammar and understand and apply correct usage.
LIT 375 Topics in Twentieth- Century Literature	Students will be able to understand, interpret and respond in writing to the formal, historical and thematic components of literary texts.	Identify one or more of the major ideas, literary genres, and authors of the twentieth century	understand one or more literary genres common to the twentieth century		practice rhetorical and argumentative skills and ability to incorporate textual evidence.	Practice strategies for editing and proofreading; review areas of weakness in one's grammar and understand and apply correct usage.
LIT400 Senior Seminar in Literature	close reading of primary and secondary texts	Implement the key elements and terms of literature, such as tone, point of view, figurative language, plot structure in their analysis of literature	Have a thorough acquaintance with representative texts from the capstone's chosen thematic	Discern and judge primary and secondary sources	Write a compelling argument or thesis that also has a strong stance or voice; • Write focused and provocative introductions and conclusions; • Write well-formed paragraphs containing textual evidence and analysis from a variety of sources that support the argument (i.e. integrating your ideas with others); • Use meticulous citation and bibliography	Practice strategies for editing and proofreading; review areas of weakness in one's grammar and understand and apply correct usage.

		Program Learning Objectives					
Courses		1	2	3	4	5	6
		CLOSE READING: 1. Student reads a text closely, paying attention to the significance of words, syntax, and their contribution to the meaning of the text as a whole.	ELEMENTS AND TERMS OF LITERATURE: 2. Student identifies the key elements and terms of literature, such as tone, form, point of view, figurative language, and plot structure in their analysis of literature.	GENRE: Student shows awareness of a given genre and its conventions within a historical context.	LITERARY INTERPRETATION: Student appropriately uses secondary and theoretical sources in support of literary analysis.	WRITING FOR LITERATURE: Student writes critically on literature, including setting up a thesis, incorporating textual evidence, writing a coherent argument, and citing sources correctly according to a standardized format.	EDITING: Student produces a paper that is edited for clarity and grammatical correctness.
LIT405 Senior Seminar in Literature and Law	Course Learning Objective close reading of primary and secondary texts	Course Learning Objective	Course Learning Objective understand literature and law as modes of story-telling; • understand literature and law as modes of thought, communication, and expression which interrogate similar issues of human power (such as sovereignty, authority, hegemony, conquest and compulsion); • understand literature and law as instruments of hegemony; • recognize literature and law as disciplines relating to the nature of human order, rules, and boundaries;	Course Learning Objective Use primary and secondary sources appropriately to construct a research paper, supported by meticulous citations and appropriate bibliography	Course Learning Objective Write a compelling argument or thesis that demonstrates a grasp of the interrelationships between law and literature as disciplines; • Write, discuss, and analyze a legal issue, with incisiveness and insight, by correlating legal texts, questions and concerns with extra-legal texts, questions, and concerns; • Write a well-formed argument containing textual evidence and analysis from both literary and legal sources that support the argument (i.e. integrating one's own ideas with those of others in the field of literature and law);	Course Learning Objective Practice strategies for editing and proofreading; review areas of weakness in one's grammar and understand and apply correct usage.	Course Learning Objective

Guiding Principles for Assessment

- The Department of English is committed to assessment and to development of a coherent program to ensure and advance its educational activities.
- The department values the involvement of all students and faculty in the assessment process.
- The faculty of the English department, given its accountability for the curriculum of the English major, has primary responsibility for the development and implementation of assessment activities.
- Statements of learning goals of the major shall originate with, and be approved by, the faculty of the program.
- Student learning will be assessed using both direct and indirect methods and quantitative and qualitative data.
- The non-aggregated data gathered for assessment purposes shall remain confidential and shall be used only for the purposes of assessment.
- Assessment of student learning outcomes will be used to improving learning, not evaluate faculty.
- Assessment is systematic, ongoing, and cyclic.
- Assessment will be simple, doable, and consistent with the program's mission.
- The assessment program is dynamic and will evolve over time.

How Results Will Be Used for Student Learning

- The faculty will meet at least once a year to review the outcomes of assessment, to compare outcomes to pre-established standards, and to decide on action to be taken.
- Possible actions as a result of an assessment report are:
 - No action is required; students are meeting the standard.
 - No action is required at this time; explore more fully the reasons why the students did not meet the standard.
 - Identify areas in the curriculum where the learning goal should be enforced but is not.
 - Identify areas in the curriculum where the learning goal can be reinforced, and in what ways.
 - Introduce new requirements in specific areas of the curriculum.
 - Redesign the rubric/assessment tool; it does not measure what we are looking for.
 - Alter the sequence of courses or prerequisites for students.
- This information will be contained in an annual assessment report to be distributed to the faculty and housed on the department's Blackboard organizational site. A copy of the assessment report will also be shared with the Dean for Undergraduate Studies and the Director of Assessment.

Assessment Process and Criteria

Direct Assessment Tools

The Subcommittee on Outcomes Assessment in the major met in spring 2011 to refine the program learning goals (section 2). Each year three reviewers will collect a sample of papers from the scheduled course(s), define the parameters and standards by which each goal can be measured, and score the essays. The results will be compiled into an annual report detailing strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum, and initiating procedures to ameliorate weaknesses when necessary.

Indirect Assessment Tools

Learning goals are also assessed by students themselves in an exit survey administered by the Department of English in which students are asked to reflect on the program as a whole as well as their progress toward each learning goal. The survey asks students to identify their degree of success in attaining each goal, those classes where the skill/goal was taught, and places in the curriculum where they believe the skill/goal should be emphasized. Results are compiled and included in the annual report.

Assessment Schedule

Year One — 2010

Capstone Pilot Assessment

- Collect senior exit surveys and sample of senior seminar essays (spring and fall)
- Quantify data from exit surveys
- Create learning goals and scoring rubric for direct assessment
- Score senior seminar essays
- Compile results of direct assessment and indirect assessment into annual report; make recommendations for alterations to assessment or curriculum

Year Two — 2011

Capstone Assessment, Revised

- Collect senior exit surveys and sample of senior seminar essays (spring and fall)
- Quantify data from exit surveys
- Operationalize terms from scoring rubric on 4-point scale
- Score senior seminar essays
- Compile results of direct assessment and indirect assessment into annual report;

<p>make recommendations for alterations to assessment and/or curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin plan for assessment of Historical Topics courses; use findings from two Fall 2011 programs (Writing Fellow and Writing Center Pilot Program) to develop rubric for student and faculty assessment of student writing • Discuss tools for assessing LIT 260
<p>Year Three — 2012</p> <p>Historical Topics Courses, LIT 370-375</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess all six learning goals in a sample of papers from these courses to gauge the strengths and weaknesses of the Historical Topics area of the curriculum and decide what these courses should focus on, and how it can support the curriculum overall. • Test use of rubrics in Historical Topics courses for Spring 2012 • Compile results of direct assessment and indirect assessment into annual report; make recommendations for alterations to assessment and/or curriculum.
<p>Year Four — 2013</p> <p>Critical Methods, Literature and the Law, LIT 300 & LIT 305</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess learning goals 1, 3, 4, 5 & 6 • Compile results of direct assessment and indirect assessment into annual report; make recommendations for alterations to assessment and/or curriculum.
<p>Year Five — 2014</p> <p>Introduction to Literary Study, LIT 260 End of Cycle special assessment report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess goals 1, 2, 5 & 6 • Compile results of direct assessment and indirect assessment into annual report; make recommendations for alterations to assessment and/or curriculum. • Compile results of five annual assessments and changes made during this time. Provide an overview “state of the major” and suggest changes where needed.

NEW FIVE-YEAR PLAN

- Previous plan assessed individual courses.
- New plan will assess individual learning objectives across all levels of the English Department curriculum.

The English Major's first Five-Year Outcomes Assessment Plan emphasized particular courses, moving backwards from our capstone courses, LIT 400 and 405, to our methodological courses LIT 300 and 305 to Historical Perspectives courses (LIT 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375) and then to LIT 260. We learned a great deal about the individual courses and, as various annual reports suggest, we have taken measures based on our OA findings to improve them (such as making our HP courses writing intensive and designing a student-friendly rubric for use in these courses). The new OA Five-Year plan will assess our learning outcomes *across* our curriculum by taking a desired outcome and focusing on it over the 100, 200, 300, and 400 levels. The learning outcomes of the Major are:

1. Student reads a text closely, paying attention to the significance of words, syntax, and their contribution to the meaning of the text as a whole.
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As a natural segue from our 2013-14 focus on LIT 260, the first two outcomes (close reading and literary terminology) will be the focus of our OA for 2014-15. We find in our senior surveys a keen interest in continuing such instruction at all levels of our curriculum. A graduating major wrote that close reading "should be the foundation for every class structure and not supplementary. It should be re-introduced in each class because professors don't all teach it the same." A different student explains in her senior survey that "I think that after LIT 260, professors should have a simple review of the skills so that students are always reminded of the skills they require to function in these classes." A focus on close reading also promises to engender interesting intra-departmental conversations from the theoretical (how is "close reading" different in ancient or medieval texts compared to contemporary literature?) to the practical (how much reading do we expect students to do and how has our instruction adapted to their different reading practices?). The new OA Five-Year plan will start in 2015-16, though design of the OA process will be one of the major foci of the English Major Advising Committee in 2014-15. Beginning in 2015-16, we will spend two years focusing on how close reading skills are developed as part of meeting objectives 3 and 4, which concern genre and historical awareness. We will focus first on LIT 300 and the "Historical Perspectives" courses (LIT 37x), investigating how well students develop ways to understand and explain texts in the context of

history and genre. The second year of that cycle (2016-17) will look at the Literature and Law sequence (LIT 305 and LIT 405) as a particular way of exploring genres and historical contexts. In addition, we have found a need to assess the Honors Projects (LIT 489), which will also form part of our assessment from 2015-17. The Honors Projects, where students develop advanced independent research projects under faculty mentorship, have not yet been assessed formally, and the Department recognizes a need to study both their underlying objectives and students' success at meeting them.