

# Campus Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

## Unit Name: English Assessment Summary Fall 2007-Spring 2008

What are the student learning outcomes in your unit?

The Writing program has developed a curriculum that focuses on summary, analysis, and synthesis as the essential components of academic writing, and our W130 / W131 courses provide extensive instruction and practice in these forms, along with an emphasis on clarity and correctness of style, grammatical correctness, and knowledge of the conventions of quoting, citing, and documenting sources. During the 2007-2008 academic year, we will be collecting samples of summaries and short analyses from all of our full-time and adjunct faculty in order to assess students' mastery of these foundational skills. At the same time, we will be assessing the clarity and correctness of their writing. We will request that each instructor submit summaries and analyses that received grades of A, B, and C in their Fall and Spring sections. Doug Swartz and Lou Ann Karabel will assemble the materials and convene a committee to review the work based on a set of criteria. For summary, we will be looking at the accuracy, clarity, and completeness of the summary, along with correctness and readability. With the analyses, we will be looking for well-formulated and effective theses and effective use of details in support of those theses. From this review, we will develop ideas of how we can provide more effective instruction in these basic forms.

In the coming year, we will also be planning ways to assess how well students manage the more longer and complex synthesis assignments from our W131 courses, and working on an assessment plan for W231.

English majors collect one written paper from each literature and writing class taken and create a portfolio including an essay which identifies the student's sense of the strengths and weaknesses of the program. The portfolio is presented to two professors who conduct an exit interview in which these are identified and discussed. Information from these interviews is reported back and goals are set. For example, student feedback has led to a reassessment of scheduling evening classes, offering a screen-writing class, and adding more critical theory to literature classes. Following the schedule of the school year and the timing for graduation, these interviews are usually conducted in the late spring; goals should be set in the fall and evaluated in the spring. Each English major takes a capstone course, usually in the senior year, which studies a variety of topics, but which uses similar assignments, specifically extended research and documentation. Work must be done to evaluate the experience of non-majors in English classes.

Which outcome did you assess this academic year?

Summarizing in writing classes, and literary analysis of a short work in literature classes.

How did you assess their skills before, during and / or at the end of the semester/ academic year?

In the Spring, the composition program collected samples from teachers in the Stretch program of short visual analyses of photographs and cartoons and summaries of essays. We are looking for a clear focus and thesis in the analyses, and the effective use of visual details in developing and supporting that thesis. In the summaries, we are looking for accuracy, completeness, and readability. Based on a preliminary reading of these essays that suggested that instructors were doing different things with these assignments, we have decided to collect another set of analyses and summaries with more specific criteria about, for instance, objects of analysis and the length of summaries.

We have collected essays on a single poem from each literature class. We met to assess the strengths and weaknesses of these pieces of writing, and set that as our goals for improvement for the coming year.

Please summarize the data you have collected this semester / academic year.

Literary analysis appears to be merely paraphrasing the literary work. We have set a goal of teaching students to consider style as component of the literary effect.

Still assessing the writing goals.

Please describe any programmatic changes you have made or are planning to make based on the data you have collected.

We are setting a goal in the literature classes of asking students to consider style as component of the literary effect of written work.

**\*\*Note: Please use this template to provide the responses to the prompts above.\*\***