

AC 2024-2025 Assessment

Program: Bachelor of Arts (BA) in English (221)

College: Arts and Sciences

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Northwestern State Mission: Northwestern State University is a responsive, student-oriented institution committed to acquiring, creating, and disseminating knowledge through innovative teaching, research, and service. With its certificate, undergraduate, and graduate programs, Northwestern State University prepares its increasingly diverse student population to contribute to an inclusive global community with a steadfast dedication to improving our region, state, and nation.

College of Arts and Sciences' Mission: The College of Arts & Sciences, the largest college at Northwestern State University, is a diverse community of scholars, teachers, and students, working collaboratively to acquire, create, and disseminate knowledge through transformational, high-impact experiential learning practices, research, and service. The College strives to produce graduates who are productive members of society equipped with the capability to promote economic and social development and improve the overall quality of life in the region. The College provides an unequalled undergraduate education in the social and behavioral sciences, English, communication, journalism, media arts, biological and physical sciences, and the creative and performing arts, and at the graduate level in the creative and performing arts, English, TESOL, and Homeland Security. Uniquely, the College houses the Louisiana Scholars' College (the State's designated Honors College), the Louisiana Folklife Center, and the Creole Center, demonstrating its commitment to community service, research, and preservation of Louisiana's precious resources.

Department of English, Foreign Languages, and Cultural Studies Mission Statement: As scholars, students, and teachers, we strive to be engaged, compassionate, curious learners and to engender the same passion in every student we teach. The critical study of texts, languages, and textual production is vital for our development as critical thinkers, effective communicators, and thoughtful community members. As a department, we offer these interdisciplinary experiences in diverse but complementary areas of study.

As scholars of literature, we cultivate comprehension and analysis of texts through evidence-based communication to acknowledge the integral operation of discourse, its forms, and its circulation inherent in all cultures.

As scholars of film and media, we prepare students to interpret and create a range of audiovisual texts through an understanding of the moving image as a form of creative expression, a global commodity, and a culturally situated work.

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As professional writers and scholars of rhetoric, composition, and linguistics, we explore the theory and practice of using language in order to prepare composers to clearly and effectively articulate and support arguments for diverse purposes, contexts, and audiences and to instruct others to do the same.

As creative writers, we build communities where we nurture students as they discover and hone their expressive voices and personal aesthetics through experimentation in style, genre, and form.

As language and TESOL scholars, we bridge cultures through the study of world languages and cultures to expand our horizons, foster understanding of each other, better understand our own languages and cultures, and prepare culturally competent instructors to teach languages effectively.

As folklorists and scholars of cultural studies, we prepare students to document, analyze, and sustain cultural practices and products and provide students with the opportunity to engage with the folk and their lore through ethnographic study, allowing us to examine the dynamics of identity formation, cultural production, exchange, and consumption, and the negotiations these acts entail.

As scholars at Northwestern State University, each faculty and staff member of the Department of English, Foreign Languages, and Cultural Studies is committed to helping our students and each other become effective composers of texts, critical consumers of texts, and responsible members of physical and digital spaces who exchange knowledge locally, nationally, and globally.

Undergraduate English Major Mission Statement: The undergraduate major in English is a dynamic, student-oriented program focused on rigorously preparing students to achieve in diverse fields. The undergraduate program focuses on developing, providing, and supporting innovative, responsive, and accessible education. The program encourages a mastery of disciplinary literature, thoughtful research, professional development, and cross-curricular innovation as members of an engaged scholarly community. Through encompassing a diverse suite of related fields of study, the English major offers its students access to creative, critical, and compositional skills, providing them invaluable versatility in a rapidly changing market.

Methodology: The faculty member responsible for teaching each course will assess the work of English majors in that course and report their findings to the Coordinator of Undergraduate Studies. The assessors will only evaluate work based on the SLOs each course targets. Student work will be assessed using the rubric appended to this document. On the rubric, the “targeted” column pertains to whether the SLO was explicitly targeted by the paper assignment, as determined by the assessor(s). On the rubric, the “evaluation” column is for the assessor’s evaluation of how well the student’s work meets each SLO. The assessor(s) will mark “not applicable” for any goal that is not relevant to the pertinent course. The assessor(s) will mark a writing sample “weak” if the goal was explicitly targeted by the assignment but does not appear in the paper. Faculty will meet

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during the fall on call week to discuss the results and determine the actions that need to be taken in response to the evaluation. Individual meetings will be held with faculty during on call week, if necessary. The Coordinator of Undergraduate Studies, in consultation with faculty and the department advisory committee, will propose changes to measurable outcomes, assessment tools for the next period, and, where needed, curriculum and program changes.

Note. Based on the AC 2023-2024 assessment, it was determined that a more comprehensive, less federated approach would improve the overall quality of the report and better account for student learning progress. Therefore, the twelve SLOs from AC 2023-2024 have been apportioned to 4 SLOs in AC 2024-2025.

Student Learning Outcomes

SLO 1. Engagement with the discipline.

Students in the English BA program will engage with the contexts, theories, and methodologies of English and Cultural Studies as disciplines. Students will be able to contextualize their work in terms of social and literary history; use theoretical perspectives to inform their writing; and apply relevant methodologies to their work.

Measure 1.1 (Direct – Knowledge)

Each semester, research papers and/or creative projects completed by majors enrolled in ENGL 2070: World Literature, ENGL 4800: Principles of Research, and ENGL 4810: Senior Seminar will be evaluated using the standardized *Assessment Rubric for English Major Writing* (attached). The work will be evaluated to determine if students can demonstrate a basic understanding of the contexts, theories, and methodologies of English and Cultural Studies as disciplines. At least 75% of students in each course will score competent-to-strong or higher on the evaluation.

Findings: Target Not Met.

ENGL 2070 – target was not met

ENGL 4800 – target was met

ENGL 4810 – target was met.

Analysis: In AC 2023-24, no targets were met. The revised SLO 1 roughly incorporates former SLOs 1-4 into one SLO. In AC 2023-24, 75% of students met the target for SLO 1, 63% for SLO 2, 78% for SLO 3, and 92% for SLO 4. Based on reflection and past feedback, faculty have restructured our assessment beginning in the 2024-25 academic year. Therefore, our basis for comparison with past assessments is limited. Our revised approach will enable us to track student progress from their first course in the major (ENGL 2070) to their senior capstone courses (ENGL 4800 and 4810).

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As a result of these changes in 2024-25, the target was not met. In ENGL 2070, the target was not met with 7 of 11 (64%) students scoring competent-to-strong or higher in their ability to demonstrate a basic understanding of the contexts, theories, and methodologies of English and Cultural Studies as disciplines upon evaluation. In ENGL 4800, the target was met with 4 of 5 (80%) scoring competent-to-strong or higher on the evaluation. In ENGL 4810, the target was met with 3 of 4 (75%) scoring competent-to-strong or higher on the evaluation. These results will form the baseline for future comparisons.

Decision: In AC 2024-25, the target was not met. The target was met in ENGL 4800 and 4810, but not 2070. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-25 results, faculty in ENGL 2070, ENGL 4800, and ENGL 4810 will drive improvement by developing new lessons and assignments, in AC 2025-26, to target students' understanding of the contexts, theories, and methodologies of English and Cultural Studies as disciplines. These changes will directly impact students' engagement with and understanding of English and Cultural Studies as disciplines. The target will remain set at 75% of students scoring a competent-to-strong or higher on the evaluation for AC 2025-26.

Measure 1.2 (Indirect - Self-assessment)

Each semester, either in a written reflection or interview with their instructor, majors enrolled in ENGL 2070: World Literature and ENGL 4810: Senior Seminar will discuss what they have learned over the course of their degree thus far. ENGL 2070 students will be asked about how prepared they feel for the upper-level courses they will subsequently take. Students completing ENGL 4810 will be asked about how prepared they feel for either graduate school or the professional world. At least 75% of students in each course will indicate that they feel prepared for their future after these classes.

Findings: Target Met.

ENGL 2070 – not assessed
ENGL 4810 – target was met.

Analysis: In AC 2023-24, no targets were met. This is a completely new measure that does not correspond to any previous SLO measures. The revised SLO 1 roughly incorporates former SLOs 1-4 into one SLO. In AC 2023-24 75% of students met the target for SLO 1, 63% for SLO 2, 78% for SLO 3, and 92% for SLO 4. This data reflects faculty member's perceptions of our students' learning. Based on past feedback, we have restructured our assessment starting in the 2024-2025 academic year. This is the first of two indirect measures we are implementing in order to track our students' perception of their own learning. This SLO was developed in Spring 2025, so only ENGL 4810 students were assessed.

As a result of these changes in 2024-25, the target was met. In ENGL 4810, 3 out of 4 (75%) students indicated that they feel prepared for their future after completing this class. As a result of focused instruction on post-undergraduate options, the majority of

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students in ENGL 4810 felt prepared to pursue either employment or graduate school. These results will form the baseline for future comparisons.

Decision: In AC 2024-25, the target was met in ENGL 4810. Based on the analysis of the 2024-25 results and to drive improvement in AC 2025-26, faculty in ENGL 2070 and ENGL 4810 will develop new lessons and assignments to target students' sense of preparedness for their academic and professional growth. Such lessons might focus on note taking, informal versus formal research, literary history, job searching, and interview practice. This SLO will be assessed in both ENGL 2070 and ENGL 4810 in the future. These changes will directly impact students' sense of preparedness for future courses and/or the professional world. The target will remain set at 75% of students indicating that they feel prepared for their future after these classes in AC 2025-26.

SLO 2. Effective and Original Writing.

Students in the English BA program will demonstrate effective and original writing. Students will demonstrate the general skills of college-level exposition developed to some degree of sophistication, as evident in the clarity, precision, fluidity, and aptness of grammar, mechanics, and word choice, as well as in higher-level structural flexibility. Students will produce original works that demonstrate an awareness of genre, form, audience, creativity, and voice.

Measure 2.1 (Direct – Skill)

Each semester, research papers and/or creative projects completed by majors enrolled in ENGL 2070: World Literature and ENGL 4810: Senior Seminar will be evaluated using the standardized *Assessment Rubric for English Major Writing* (attached). The work will be evaluated to determine if students can demonstrate effective and original writing. At least 75% of students in each course will score competent-to-strong or higher on the evaluation.

Findings: Target Not Met.

ENGL 2070 – target was not met

ENGL 4810 – target was not met.

Analysis: In AC 2023-24, no targets were met. The revised SLO 2 roughly incorporates former SLOs 5-7 and 12 into one SLO. In AC 2023-24, 66% of students met the target for SLO 5, 75% for SLO 6, 72% for SLO 7, and 92% for SLO 12. Based on analysis of these results, faculty have restructured our assessment beginning in the 2024-2025 academic year. Therefore, our basis for comparison with past assessments is limited. Our revised approach will enable us to track student progress from their first course in the major (ENGL 2070) to the completion of their capstone project in ENGL 4810.

As a result of these changes in 2024-25, the target was not met. In ENGL 2070, the target was not met with 6 of 11 (55%) students scoring competent-to-strong or higher in

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their ability to produce effective and original writing. In ENGL 4810, the target was not met with 2 out of 4 (50%) students scoring competent-to-strong or higher upon evaluation. This shows that students need better instruction in effective and original writing throughout all their English courses, from beginning to end. These results will form the baseline for future comparisons.

Decision: In AC 2024-25, the target was not met. Based on the analysis of these results, faculty across the major will work to develop new lessons and assignments aimed at improving students' ability to produce effective and original writing in AC 2025-26. These changes will improve students' ability to compose effective, original writing across multiple genres and for multiple audiences. Since this was the first time our new assessments were used, the target will remain set at 75% of students scoring competent-to-strong or higher on the evaluation in AC 2025-26.

SLO 3. Effective Research.

Students in the English BA program will demonstrate effective research. Students will use sources beyond the one of primary focus to establish relevant support for their argumentation. These sources may be assigned by an instructor specifically for an assignment, ones assigned earlier in the course, or ones the student knows from another course, in addition to those discovered through research. For those students who work in folklore, film, creative or professional writing, this outcome may appear in other forms than traditional library research, such as interviews, investigations of companies or individuals, or comparison of websites, films, or versions of folktales. Regardless of the sources used and the work produced, all students will document resources accurately, consistently, and fully.

Measure 3.1 (Direct – Skill)

Each semester, research papers and/or creative projects completed by majors enrolled in ENGL 2070: World Literature and ENGL 4800: Principles of Research will be evaluated using the standardized *Assessment Rubric for English Major Writing* (attached). The work will be evaluated to determine if students can demonstrate effective research. At least 75% of students in each course will score competent-to-strong or higher on the evaluation.

Findings: Target Not Met

ENGL 2070 – target was not met
ENGL 4800 – target was met.

Analysis: In AC 2023-24, no targets were met. The revised SLO 3 combines former SLOs 8-10 into one SLO. In AC 2023-24, 67% of students met the target for SLO 8, 73% for SLO 9, and 77% for SLO 10. Based on past feedback, we have restructured our assessment starting in the 2024-2025 academic year. As a result, our basis for comparison with previous assessments is limited. This new approach will enable us to

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track student progress from their first course in the major (ENGL 2070) through the completion of the research portion of their capstone project in ENGL 4800.

As a result of these changes in 2024-25, the target was not met. In ENGL 2070, the target was not met, with 6 out of 11 (55%) students scoring competent to strong or higher in their ability to conduct effective research. In ENGL 4800, the target was met, with 4 out of 5 (80%) students scoring competent to strong or higher on the evaluation. This shows that students need better instruction on conducting effective research throughout all their English courses, from beginning to end. These results will serve as the baseline for future comparisons.

Decision: In AC 2024-25, the target was not met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-25 results, faculty in ENGL 2070, ENGL 4800, and ENGL 4810 will drive improvement by developing new lessons and assignments in AC 2025-26 to enhance students' understanding of the contexts, theories, and methodologies of English and Cultural Studies as disciplines. These changes will improve our students' ability to conduct effective research for a variety of different projects at different levels of expertise. The target will remain set at 75% of students scoring competent-to-strong or higher on the evaluation in AC 2025-26.

SLO 4. Professionalism.

Students in the English BA program will demonstrate professionalism. Students will engage in critical thinking, problem solving, focus, integrity, project management, and time management. Students will demonstrate clear communication, identify peer collaborators, and follow through on commitments.

Measure 4.1 (Indirect – Questionnaire)

Each semester, students in ENGL 2070, ENGL 4800, and ENGL 4810 will complete a self-inventory questionnaire taking account of their professionalism. At least 75% of students will indicate through a majority of their responses that they feel they have acted professionally throughout the semester.

Findings: Target Not Met.

ENGL 2070 – not assessed

ENGL 4800 – target was not met

ENGL 4810 – target was not met.

Analysis: In AC 2023-24, no targets were met. The revised SLO 4 incorporates the former SLO 11 with newly added elements. In AC 2023-24, 75% of students met the target for SLO 11. Based on past feedback, we have restructured our assessment beginning in the 2024-2025 academic year; therefore, we do not have a basis for comparison for this new measure. This SLO was initially developed exclusively for

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seniors in the capstone course sequence but will be evaluated in ENGL 2070 to document changes in student behavior.

As a result of these changes in 2024-25, the target was not met. In ENGL 4800, the target was not met, with 2 out of 5 (40%) students indicating through most of their responses that they feel they have acted professionally throughout the semester. In ENGL 4810, the target was not met, with 2 out of 4 (50%) students indicating through most of their responses that they feel they have acted professionally throughout the semester. This shows that students need more guidance on how to conduct themselves as professionals who are part of a discourse community. These results will form the baseline for future comparison.

Decision: In AC 2024-25, the target was not met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-25 results, faculty in ENGL 2070, ENGL 4800, and ENGL 4810 will drive improvement by developing new lessons and assignments in AC 2025-26 to enhance students' understanding of the expectations for professional conduct in our field. These changes will have a direct impact on the professionalism students exhibit both in and outside of class. The target will remain set at 75% of students scoring competent-to-strong or higher on the evaluation for AC 2025-26.

Comprehensive summary of key evidence of improvements based on analysis of results. The following reflects all the changes implemented to drive the continuous process of seeking improvement in AC 2024-2025. These changes are based on the knowledge gained through analyzing the AC 2023-2024 results and lessons learned.

- Redesigned assessment procedures to streamline the focus of all evaluations. We have reduced our assessment from 12 SLOs and a total of 12 measures to 4 SLOs and a total of 5 measures.
- Redesigned assessment procedures to only collect data in ENGL 2070: World Literature, ENGL 4800: Principles of Research, and ENGL 4810: Senior Seminar. These are the only courses that are required of all English majors, regardless of their concentration. This change will enable us to clearly track the results for specific cohorts as they progress through our major.
- Redesigned assessment measures to include indirect methods of assessment. Previously, all measures were direct. Now, 3 measures are direct and 2 are indirect.
- Faculty adapted existing assignments to target the SLOs relevant to a given course.

Plan of action moving forward

For AC 2025-2026, the following refinements will be made to the curriculum:

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- Faculty will design new lessons and assignments to target the newly revised SLOs.
- The indirect assessments will be incorporated into ENGL 2070 starting in fall 2025.
- All courses will educate students on the importance of viewing themselves as professionals who are part of a community of scholars and creators.

Findings: Data

Measure 1.1

	Weak	Weak-to-Competent	Competent	Competent-to-Strong	Strong
ENGL 2070			4	4	3
ENGL 4800			1	2	2
ENGL 4810				1	3

Measure 1.2

	Feel Unprepared	Feel neither Prepared nor Unprepared	Feel Prepared
ENGL 2070	n/a	n/a	n/a
ENGL 4800	n/a	n/a	n/a
ENGL 4810		1	3

Measure 2.1

	Weak	Weak-to-Competent	Competent	Competent-to-Strong	Strong
ENGL 2070			5	2	4
ENGL 4810				2	2

Measure 3.1

	Weak	Weak-to-Competent	Competent	Competent-to-Strong	Strong
ENGL 2070			5	2	4
ENGL 4800		1		3	1

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Measure 4.1

	Behaved Unprofessionally	Behaved Somewhat Professionally	Behaved Professionally
ENGL 2070	n/a	n/a	n/a
ENGL 4800	1	2	2
ENGL 4810		2	2

Findings: Percentage Meeting Target by Course

Measure	Percentage of Students Meeting Target in ENGL 2070	Percentage of Students Meeting Target in ENGL 4800	Percentage of Students Meeting Target in ENGL 4810	Percentage of Total Students Meeting Target in 2024-2025
1.1	64	80	75	70
1.2	n/a	n/a	75	75
2.1	55	n/a	50	53
3.1	55	80	n/a	53
4.1	n/a	40	50	44

Comparison: AY 2023-24 and 2024-25

2024-25 Measure	Corresponding 2023-4 Measures	Percentage of Total Students Meeting Target in 2023-2024	Percentage of Total Students Meeting Target in 2024-2025
1.1	1	75	70
	2	63	
	3	78	
	4	92	
1.2	n/a	n/a	75
2.1	5	66	53
	6	75	
	7	72	
	12	92	
3.1	8	67	53
	9	73	
	10	77	
4.1	11	75	44