

UWG Comprehensive Program Review - Template

College/School	COAH	Year			2012
Department	English and Philosophy				
Academic Program	English				
Program Level	Graduate				
Students (From IRP)	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Graduates Last Five Years	22	24	26	27	28
Majors Last Five Years	5	3	6	5	4
Pre-majors Last Five Years	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
1) Learning Outcomes: In the boxes below, please provide the following information: A) academic program learning outcomes B) a data summary of student performance related to the learning outcomes for this program; (include a link to data tables from which this summary was created, if applicable); C) a summary of the curriculum, pedagogical, and assessment modifications that resulted from this performance data and) a discussion of future assessment plans.					
A) Program Learning Outcomes					
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Graduate students will be able to demonstrate advanced mastery of content within the discipline by answering comprehensive questions about specific writers, genres, texts, and literary periods that they have studied. 2. Graduate students will be able to demonstrate that they have achieved refined skills in professional and scholarly writing. This expectation presumes a command of pertinent critical assumptions, methodologies, and practices. 3. Graduate students will be able to demonstrate a facility in relating the facts and ideas of the discipline to cognate fields and to explore their correspondence, particularly within the context of Western intellectual history. 4. Graduate students will be able to demonstrate a keen awareness of contemporary issues in the study of literature, including those which emanate from an understanding of the differences among cultural value systems. 					
B) Data Summary					

English MA Exam Results

Year: 2008-12

Exams Taken: 29

Exams Passed: 26

British Literature I	Exceptional (4)	Good (3)	Average (2)	Weak (1)
Specific Writers/Texts	15	9	2	3
Genre/Form	7	16	5	1
Critical Methodologies	8	13	7	1
Historical/Cultural Contexts	9	14	2	4

British Literature II	Exceptional	Good	Average	Weak
Specific Writers/Texts	12	12	3	2
Genre/Form	6	16	6	1
Critical Methodologies	7	13	7	2
Historical/Cultural Contexts	7	12	5	5

American Literature I	Exceptional	Good	Average	Weak
Specific Writers/Texts	11	13	4	1
Genre/Form	8	15	5	1
Critical Methodologies	9	13	6	1
Historical/Cultural Contexts	11	13	4	1

American Literature II	Exceptional	Good	Average	Weak
Specific Writers/Texts	15	12	1	1
Genre/Form	8	17	3	1
Critical Methodologies	8	17	3	1
Historical/Cultural Contexts	11	10	7	1

All Areas Combined	Exceptional	Good	Average	Weak
Specific Writers/Texts	53 (46%)	46 (39%)	10 (9%)	7 (6%)
Genre/Form	29 (25%)	64 (55%)	19 (16%)	4 (4%)
Critical Methodologies	32 (28%)	56 (48%)	23 (20%)	5 (4%)
Historical/Cultural Contexts	38 (33%)	49 (42%)	18 (16%)	11 (9%)

The primary assessment tool of the English MA program is the comprehensive exam, which must be passed by every student in order to matriculate. In 2008, the exam format was substantially changed when a set list of texts for each of the four exam areas listed above was replaced by a menu of authors for each list. The data collected above, over five years from 2008-12, comes exclusively from students who took the new exam. Under the revised exam system, students choose fifteen representative authors from the four exam areas, with a substantial text (or collection of texts) for each author. In consultation with the examiner from each area, candidates design a list of fifteen authors and works that demonstrate coverage in terms of historical period and genre. Each student, therefore, creates four lists, each with fifteen authors and a specified text, for a total of sixty texts. In a ninety minute oral examination with examiners from each of the four areas, students must show mastery of “the specific writers, genres, texts, and literary periods that they have studied” (learning outcome 1). In addition, they must demonstrate “a command of pertinent critical assumptions, methodologies, and practices” (learning outcome 2), “a facility in relating the facts and ideas of the discipline to cognate fields and to explore their correspondence, particularly within the context of Western intellectual history” (learning outcome 3), and finally “a keen awareness of contemporary issues in the study of literature,

including those which emanate from an understanding of the differences among cultural value systems” (learning outcome 4).

The data demonstrates that our students consistently meet the program’s learning outcomes, in the majority of cases exceeding the baselines we set for a satisfactory, passing exam. Because student performance is fairly consistent across the four areas, when the data from the four areas is combined, we note the following:

- 86% of students more than meet expectations regarding their command of specific texts.
- 80% of students more than meet expectations regarding their understanding of genre and form.
- 76% of students more than meet expectations regarding their command of critical methodologies.
- 75% of students more than meet expectations regarding their understanding of historical context.

The only learning outcome that is not assessed in the comprehensive exam is the following: “Graduate students will be able to demonstrate that they have achieved refined skills in professional and scholarly writing” (learning outcome 2). This skill is assessed on an ongoing basis throughout each candidate’s program of study. The overwhelming majority of English graduate seminars culminate in a 15-20 page (4000-6000 word) research paper. In order to receive a B in such classes, students must complete a satisfactory piece of scholarly, professional writing.

C) Summary of modifications based on the data

The assessment data collected over the past five years indicates that English MA program has consistently produced graduates with a solid foundation in literary studies, with knowledge that stretches across multiple genres and periods, and which is historically, methodologically, and critically situated. The data demonstrates that our graduates have a firm command of an extensive, comprehensive reading list of sixty texts/authors, although it also shows that students are less effective when it comes to recognizing the relationship between content and genre/form, and that our students could be even better trained in critical theory and methodologies.

In order to address these minor weaknesses, an ancillary list of critical and theoretical texts will be appended to the reading list as “suggested reading.” This list will be compiled in consultation with all English graduate faculty. However, no changes to the current curriculum seem necessary based on current assessment results.

D) Future Assessment Plans

Because the current assessment of students' writing is based solely on their success in each of their graduate seminars, the department is designing an assessment tool that tracks the development of each student's writing skills over the course of their career. The Director of Graduate Studies has begun collecting research papers written by students during their first semester in the program. The paper will be assessed according to a rubric similar to the English department's current rubric for assessing senior seminar papers (the majority of students in the program are, in fact, UWG English majors/minors), but modified to reflect the graduate program's learning outcomes. All graduating students will then submit a final research paper as they exit the program, one written during their final semester, and assessed using the same rubric.

Furthermore, with the addition of our Capstone Option in Spring, 2012, the program has an opportunity to design an additional assessment tool that measures the success of these more advanced research projects.

Under the Capstone Option, students complete a Capstone project over the course of their final two semesters of study (in most cases, spring and summer), resulting in a scholarly article of approximately 30-35 pages. The project will engage in original scholarly research and demonstrate advanced mastery of pertinent critical assumptions, methodologies, and practices in the discipline. This option was developed to attract students who were uncertain about writing a thesis of 90-100 pages but who still wanted to engage in a significant final writing project.

After announcing this option, approximately 13 of the 15 students entering the program in 2012 declared that they would be pursuing the Capstone Option. Additionally, two of the students who graduated in the summer of 2012 and one who graduated in the fall chose the Capstone Option, so a sample pool of assessable projects has already begun to accumulate.

2) Program History and Context: In the box below, please write a brief (since the last CPR) history of this program at UWG (including current strengths and weaknesses)

The Masters in English program continues to be a vital and integrated part of the English and Philosophy Department as a whole. During the past five years, the program has maintained a steady student population averaging approximately 27 students, and it has enjoyed steady, consistent growth. In 2010-11 IRP data shows that the program had 34 students, an all-time high. The program runs at peak efficiency with 25-30 students, which fills all seminar seats offered in our 6000-level classes, as well as graduate seats in 5000-level classes. Due to program's growth in the past two years, several 6000-level seminars were over-enrolled, and there were record numbers of 5000-level seats filled by English MA students. We also have maintained solid graduation rates for students pursuing the MA degree (some of our students take classes for enrichment as non-degree students, while others are taking classes to attain the requisite 18 hours of MA work in order to teach composition and have no intention of completing the degree), with 7 graduating in 2010-11 (an all-time high), and an equal number in 2011-12. Of our students seeking PhDs or MFAs in English, every single one who has engaged in the application process has met with success, many being admitted to multiple programs and choosing the best offer. We currently have English MA graduates enrolled in the following institutions: Georgia State, Alabama, Auburn, St. Louis University, San Francisco State, University of North Texas, and Emory. In each case, the students received generous funding packages. In addition, six students who graduated in the last five years are full-time instructors in the English undergraduate program, with several more working as full-time instructors at other Georgia institutions. These numbers speak volumes about the overall health and sustainability of the program.

The program has also been an active force on campus. In April, 2012, the English MA students hosted the Seventh Annual English and Philosophy Undergraduate Conference. Over the years, the conference has consisted of between twenty to thirty panels, each with three to four student presenters, each chaired by a current or former MA student. Now in its fifth year as a campus organization, the English Graduate Student Association organizes the conference, as well as several other events geared towards the students' professional development—such as colloquia on preparing conference abstracts, presenting at conferences, and enhancing GRE scores for PhD programs.

Strengths:

- With 18 graduate faculty—and (literally) dozens of scholarly monographs and hundreds of top-tier refereed articles between them—the program much more closely resembles a research-one PhD program than a regional MA program. The program's diverse course offerings reflect the wide-ranging expertise and ever-expanding interests of its faculty.
- Students get precisely what they want from the program. The high school English teachers who have graduated from our program categorically state that they have become better English teachers. Although they could have gotten the same pay increase by getting an advanced degree through the School of Ed, they sought out the rigor and challenge of our program. Graduates seeking employment as college-level instructors have found full-time jobs, here or elsewhere. Finally, our students seeking advanced English degrees have had a success rate of 100% in the past five years.
- The diverse course offerings, the redesigned exam system, and the optional thesis and Capstone tracks allow students to pursue their individual interests and craft the program to their needs, while graduating in a timely manner.
- The faculty mentoring system, the English Graduate Student Association, and the professional development colloquia all help to promote and foster a sense of community and connectedness within the program.
- Graduate Research Assistants are an absolutely vital part of the department. First year Assistants aid faculty members with their research and running their journals, while also tutoring in the Writing Center. After completing a requisite class in pedagogy and gaining experience in the Writing Center, second-year Graduate Assistants have the opportunity to assist a writing class and receive mentoring from an experienced Lecturer in the fall, becoming the teacher of record in their own section of composition in the spring, gaining invaluable work experience (and enhancing their attractiveness to PhD programs) while providing the department with instructors for several sections of first-year writing.

Weaknesses:

- The current size of our program only allows us to offer three graduate seminars per semester, plus two in the summer (i.e. eight per year). With eighteen graduate faculty members, this means at least two years between graduate courses, which in turn means that our students rarely have the opportunity to take more than one class with a given professor. The only solution, of course, is to continue to grow the program to a point where we can offer four courses per semester.
- While we do occasionally attract students from other states (or at least quadrants of Georgia), the overwhelming majority of our students were already living within a fifty mile radius of the campus when they applied. However, the cultural diversity of our students tends to ward off any sense of provincialism.
- A more comprehensive assessment of student writing from entry to exit.

3) Program Planning: Please write a brief narrative on the future plans for this academic program, including how these plans support the UWG strategic plan.

The English MA Program continues to attract and actively recruit an ethnically diverse student body, and beginning last summer, it provided support for the Bridges and UWide programs in the form of 8 graduate assistants working in classrooms and staffing the writing center. These programs (including 2013's summer IGNITE program) foster a successful transition to college for at risk students and help to sustain the University's commitment to serving an ethnically and economically diverse student population. The MA program, in consultation with the English Department as a whole, has an opportunity to establish a long-term relationship with these programs, which in turn will help to stabilize summer funding for GRAs.

The future plans for the program are in accordance with the university's strategic plan to be a "destination member of a top tier of comprehensive universities in the University System of Georgia." Although the program is already well-represented at state and regional research conferences, we plan to significantly expand student participation in conference presentations, with graduate faculty offering even greater mentoring and support of student research projects. Additionally, the Capstone Option offers students an opportunity to transform a course paper into an actual scholarly article, and part of the Capstone defense focuses on publication venues. Although English MA students have had papers published in refereed journals in the past, the program could do an even better job of encouraging its students to submit their work to nationally recognized venues.

4) Strategic and Financial Outcomes from the Previous Review: Please summarize any changes to the budget and staffing in this program since the last comprehensive program review

Financial support for the program, in the form of funds for ten to eleven Graduate Assistants, has remained steady. And although there was a two year period when the re-assigned time for the Director of Graduate Studies was reduced from one course per semester to one course per year, the re-assigned time of one course per semester has been re-established, which recognizes both the administration time required to run the program during the fall and spring, but also during the summer (documented at approximately 70 hours), which is uncompensated.

5) Program Quality: Please evaluate the overall quality of this academic program.

The overall quality of the program is excellent. Students are taught by a top-flight faculty, all of whom are actively researching and publishing in their various fields of expertise. Assessment data indicates students are graduating with a high-level of achievement, and students are extremely satisfied with the level of education they receive. Enrollment data shows that program continues to grow at a sustainable rate, and the numbers have never been stronger than in the past three years.

6) Program Viability: Please discuss the long term viability of this program

The long term viability of the program has never been stronger, at least in terms of enrollment, though it has very likely reached a plateau unless there is funding for additional faculty lines and additional GRA positions. The program continues to attract highly motivated, dedicated learners, and the students, in turn, have maintained a real sense of community and culture within the program. They act as officers of the English Graduate Students Association, they sponsor and participate in colloquia, they present papers at conferences together, they host faculty-students mixers, and they spread the word about the program to future candidates. English GRAs provide approximately 30 hours of tutoring each week in the Writing Center, and, beginning in the spring of 2012, several have acted as the teacher of record in ENGL 1102 classrooms (two last spring, three in the spring of 2013). Having established a successful teacher-training program, we hope to grow the number of English MA students teaching classes to four per year. This is another new facet to an already vibrant, energized program.

7) Program Productivity: Please discuss the productivity of this program in terms of both faculty and students.

I. Faculty Productivity

Faculty productivity in the areas of professional development, teaching, and service has remained consistently high. Achievements in the area of Professional Development include the following highlights:

Recent Book and Monograph Publications by Graduate Faculty:

- Dr. Patrick Erben, *A Harmony of the Spirits: Translation and the Language of Community in Early Pennsylvania*. UNC Press, 2012.
- Dr. Lisa Crafton, *Transgressive Theatricality, Wollstonecraft, and Romanticism*. Ashgate Press, 2011.
- Dr. Stacy Boyd, *Black Men Worshipping: Intersecting Anxieties of Race, Gender, and Christian Embodiment*. Macmillan, 2011.
- Dr. Chad Davidson and Dr. Greg Fraser, *Analyze Anything: A Guide to Critical Reading and Writing*. Continuum Publishers, 2012.
- Dr. Greg Fraser, *Answering the Ruins*. Northwestern University Press, 2009.
- Dr. Chad Davidson and Dr. Greg Fraser, *Writing Poetry: Creative-Critical Approaches*. Palgrave-Macmillan, 2008.
- Dr. Chad Davidson, *The Last Predicta*. Southern Illinois UP, 2008.

Other Recent Professional Achievements by English Faculty:

- Dr. Margaret Mitchell is coeditor of *LIT: Literature Interpretation Theory*, a nationally peer-reviewed journal published by Routledge/Taylor and Francis Publishers.
- Dr. Chad Davidson developed and implemented the department’s new Italy Study Abroad program (2012)
- Dr. Josh Masters was named UWG Honors Professor of the Year (2011)
- Dr. Emily Hipchen was named UWG Faculty Advisor of the Year (2011)
- Dr. Greg Fraser was name Georgia Writer / Poet of the Year (2011)
- Dr. Meg Pearson received the COAS research award (2010)
- Dr. David Newton was the first UWG faculty member selected for the USG Executive Leadership Institute (2010)
- Dr. Greg Fraser was selected as a Fellow of the Sewanee’s Writer’s Conference (2010)
- Dr. Emily Hipchen received the J. William Fulbright Scholar Award (2008).
- English Faculty (Hipchen, Erben, and Newton) received external research fellowships or research grants.

Self-reported data from the past three department annual reports is provided below.

Area	FY10	FY11	FY12
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Number of Tenure Track Faculty	19	18	17
Scholarship and Professional Development			
Number of books and/or monographs published by faculty	2	2	4
Number of book chapters published by faculty	4	7	1
Number of peer-reviewed articles or creative works published by faculty	28	32	35

I. Student Productivity

Over the past five years, English MA students have presented work at dozens of state, regional, and national conferences, averaging at least five students per year (with some of those students presenting at multiple conferences). As mentioned above, seven graduates from the program are currently working on PhDs at top-tier universities, including Emory.

Evaluation of this Comprehensive Program Review

1) Administrative Review by the College/School Dean: Analysis and evaluative response regarding the quality, viability, and productivity of the program. Also evaluate the quality and depth of the evidence the program has provided to support its case. Finally, discuss your plans to incorporate this review into the unit's strategic and financial plans.

The University of West Georgia's MA in English is admired in the state and has produced highly successful graduates who have improved their teaching in secondary schools or gained admission to strong graduate programs at prestigious institutions. After a slight dip in enrollment a few years ago, the program has rebounded, with IRP numbers indicating 34 enrolled currently. (Please note that the narrative in section 2 provides more recent data than the IRP section in the heading.)

There is strong evidence in this report that the program takes assessment of its learning outcomes seriously and has made very specific changes in light of the results, such as significant changes in the MA exam required of all students and the addition of the Capstone option to the thesis and non-thesis options. The faculty have also created a rubric to measure the quality of initial and final research papers in the program.

The program contributes to UWG strategic goals not only through academic rigor but by contributions to the vibrancy of campus life and the integration of graduate with undergraduate education. Examples include sponsorship of the annual undergraduate conference, a carefully planned and productive GTA program, tutorial work in the University Writing Center, and participation in the summer Bridges and UWISE programs.

With the assistance of the Provost, we were able to make a modest increase in the operating funds to the department for FY13 and expect to make modest additional increases within the next two years to support the productive faculty who teach graduates as well as in the core and the major. We have increased reassigned time for the Director of Graduate Studies to increase efficiency and advising and plan to add a modest stipend to compensate for summer work in 2013. Finally, we expect to increase GRA funding for the program with a permanent infusion of \$20,000 for FY14.

2) Faculty Review (UAPC or COGS): Analysis and evaluative response regarding the quality, viability, and productivity of the academic program, and the quality and depth of the evidence the program has provided to support its case. Include recommendations for the future of the program.

1. **Quality:** The overall quality of the program appears good. Students are taught by a competent faculty, with active research and publishing activities. Assessment data indicates students are graduating with a high-level of achievement, and students are extremely satisfied with the level of education they receive. Enrollment data indicates that program has stable growth at a sustainable rate over the past three years. Current and past students report that the program meets their expectations in terms of the learning environment, faculty, and value of the degree earned have identified the program.
2. **Viability:** The long term viability of the program appears to be strong in terms of enrollment, although in order to increase enrollment above the current level funding will be necessary to support additional faculty lines and GRA positions.
3. **Productivity:** Faculty members appear to maintain a high level of competence through actively seeking opportunities for professional development, teaching, and service. Students appear to maintain a high level of productivity as evidenced by participation in professional conferences and several students moving into doctoral programs at noteworthy institutions.

Overall, the evidence provided by the academic program appears to substantiate their claims of quality,

viability, and productivity. They have a strong assessment program and clearly use results of their assessments to guide improvements.

3) Response to the Faculty and Administrative Review by the Provost's Office

This program review shows evidence that the department takes the evaluation and improvement of student learning seriously. A number of specific improvements in the program are identified based on student performance data.

Regarding productivity, the ratio of majors to graduates seems low (it appears the number of majors and graduates are on the incorrect lines). It is recommended that the department review the number of students completing the program and implement a plan to improve this number of graduates. Such a plan would bolster the productivity of this quality program and improve its reach and impact. This program meets the number of graduates recommended for a master's degree by the USG (three-year rolling average of five graduates per year). As such, it will continue on a normal review cycle.

Jon Anderson
Deputy Provost

Please attach to this report the annual student learning assessment reports since the last Comprehensive Program Review.