

PLO Assessment

Program: ENGLISH

Semester: Spring 2019

PLO 2: Write a unified, coherent, well-supported, and grammatically correct document.

Method of assessment: Analysis of essay writing across three years

Criteria: Students in the program will achieve an average of 70%

Courses included in the discussion: ENGL 120, 121, 123, and 125

Results

The collective average across English 120 sections for a first essay was 80%.

The collective average across all courses over 3 years was 80%.

ENGL 120

The department collected more data on English 120 for this assessment, including an evaluation of a first essay in the course to begin tracking changes that may result from AB705 implementation, and to anticipate students' needs.

Most instructors felt that students demonstrated a solid understanding of essay organization/structure. Thesis and topic sentences were clear. Analysis was identifiable; summaries were effective.

Students across sections and years were inconsistent in their ability to integrated quotes and paraphrases proficiently. Some instructors cited this issue as a weakness and others a strength. Overall, this area seems to have improved since the last time this PLO was assessed.

The predominant challenge across sections was students' ability to add depth and complexity to their writing. Ideas tended to be superficially connected, and clear specific support in body paragraphs was lacking. Support was frequently too general, details left vague, examples/evidence not fully explained to the reader. Paragraph unity was also a common problem.

Only one instructor mentioned sentence-level errors.

ENGL 121, 123, 125

Students demonstrated strong integrity in attributing ideas and quotes to source material. Arguments stated claims clearly, students explained their reasoning sufficiently, and displayed skills in working with rhetorical tools.

Thesis statements were sometimes broad. Papers exhibited lapses in unity. Analysis was in-depth when directed to expository writing, but weaker when focused on the literature. Tense inconsistencies and other grammar errors were also prevalent when writing about literature.

Action Plan:

Most English 120 instructors plan to incorporate more scaffolding instruction on prompt expectations, the outlining process, analysis, paragraph development, and paragraph unity. Goals include offering more hands-on support, incorporating models analytical writing and other sample essays, including more revision opportunities, and directing students to WSC workshops/activities to work on paragraphing and development.

English 121, 123, and 125 students would benefit from WSC workshops on analogy and citing drama. Instructors plan to include exercises on interpretative frameworks into their class sessions and incorporate smaller critical reading exercises on the literature selection prior to a major assignment.