

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Department of English

Doctor of Philosophy in English, Assessment Plan

English, Ph.D.

16 October 2014

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1. Student Learning Outcomes for the Doctor of Philosophy in English

The primary objective of the doctoral program in English is to offer a high-quality, contemporary, multi-faceted research degree that prepares graduates primarily to enter the highly competitive profession of higher education. The program aims to produce graduates capable of teaching a full range of courses in English studies likely to be offered in academic institutions of higher education. Thus, the program seeks to ensure that graduates have broad preparation in all major periods of British and American literature, as well as in the history of the English language and basic methods in linguistics and pedagogy. Further, students are prepared to conduct original research within the fields of English studies offered in the department. The program may also serve as preparation for graduates who seek to enter non-academic positions in government, business, and industry that require humanities-based knowledge and advanced skills in written and oral communication, critical analysis, and applied research. Specific learning outcomes are as follows:

- A. Students will be able to construct or recognize the significance of individual works, writers, and genres within the context of British and American literary history.
- B. They will be able to identify literary theory and critical methodology and produce literary interpretation informed by that theory and methodology.
- C. They will be able to identify linguistic and rhetorical theories and methodologies and produce linguistic and rhetorical analyses.
- D. They will be able to demonstrate pedagogical skill in the teaching of English language, literature, and composition.
- E. They will be able to conduct digital research and use digital tools in their teaching.
- F. They will be able to demonstrate the use of methods of advanced research and produce effective oral and written scholarship as well as literary, linguistic, or rhetorical analyses.
- G. They will be able to assess research problems within their primary field of study and propose, design, and produce research and writing that addresses one of these problems, making a substantial contribution to knowledge in the form of a monograph-like dissertation.
- H. They will be able to produce scholarly discourse in a sustained program of research through presentations at professional conferences, publications in scholarly journals, or other venues.

2. Learning Outcomes Matrix—not applicable to graduate program assessment.

3. Curriculum Map

COURSE <i>Note:</i> course supports the outcome at the B=beginning, D=developing, or P=proficient level.	Ph.D. in English: Student Learning Outcomes							
	A. Recognize the significance of works, writers, and genres within British and American literary history.	B. Identify literary theory and critical methodology and produce literary interpretation informed by that theory and methodology.	C. Identify linguistic and rhetorical theories and methodologies and produce linguistic and rhetorical analyses.	D. Show pedagogical skill in the teaching of English language, literature, and composition.	E. Conduct digital research and use digital tools in teaching.	F. Use advanced research methods and produce oral and written scholarship and literary, linguistic, or rhetorical analyses.	G. Research problems within their primary field and propose, design, and produce a monograph-like dissertation.	H. Produce scholarship in a sustained program of research.
First Year, Fall								
ENGL 600 ¹				B	B			
Research Methodology (ENGL 601, 608, or 625) ²		B				B		
History of the Language (ENGL 611, 612, or 613)		D	B					
First Year, Spring								
ENGL 600				D	D			
Issues in Criticism (ENGL 602, 603)		D				D		
Medieval Literature (ENGL 635, 636, 637 etc.)	B	D				D		

¹ English 600: Internship in the Teaching of College Writing is not required of students pursuing the Ph.D. in English. Two semesters of English 600 are required, however, for all students who serve as Teaching Assistants in the First-Year Composition program. Because nearly all of our Ph.D. students are supported by assistantships and also have teaching goals for which such assistantship experience is highly desirable, the two-semester sequence of English 600 is included in the map.

² With only very rare exceptions, students are admitted into the Ph.D. program after having completed an M.A. in English or a closely related field (e.g., Communications, Journalism). Such students may use M.A. coursework to satisfy core and distribution requirements, allowing them to employ a significant number of their 30 hours of coursework to specialize in the fields in which they will take candidacy exams and write their dissertation. The example given here, however, illustrates all of the core and distribution requirements so as to illustrate the breadth of the major program—which for most students is achieved through M.A. as well as Ph.D. courses.

COURSE <i>Note:</i> course supports the outcome at the B=beginning, D=developing, or P=proficient level.	Ph.D. in English: Student Learning Outcomes							
	A. Recognize the significance of works, writers, and genres within British and American literary history.	B. Identify literary theory and critical methodology and produce literary interpretation informed by that theory and methodology.	C. Identify linguistic and rhetorical theories and methodologies and produce linguistic and rhetorical analyses.	D. Show pedagogical skill in the teaching of English language, literature, and composition.	E. Conduct digital research and use digital tools in teaching.	F. Use advanced research methods and produce oral and written scholarship and literary, linguistic, or rhetorical analyses.	G. Research problems within their primary field and propose, design, and produce a monograph-like dissertation.	H. Produce scholarship in a sustained program of research.
Second Year, Fall								
Language/Linguistics (ENGL 615, 618, 622, etc.)			D			D		
Renaissance Literature (ENGL 638, 641, 642, etc.)	D	D				D		
Long Eighteenth Century (ENGL 656, 658, 659, etc.)	D	D				D		
Second Year, Spring								
Rhetoric (ENGL 603, 610, 630, etc.)			D					
Pre-1900 American Lit ³ (ENGL 776, 777, etc.)	P	P				P	D	B
19 th C. British Lit (ENGL 762, 764, etc.)	P	P				P	D	B
Third Year, Fall								
Language/Linguistics or Rhetoric (ENGL 620, 714, 631, 703, etc.)			P			P	D	B

³ At this point in the map, another principle of the Ph.D. program design is illustrated. Often quite early in the program students will begin taking 700-level courses, seminars, in their areas of field specialization. Four such courses are required. This map may, in fact, be somewhat realistic if it were supposed that the student in question has entered with an M.A. and a defined interest in recent and U.S. literature; such a student might well have already taken M.A. courses in related fields and hence be able to move directly into seminars without necessarily having 600-level courses in the later British and American fields reflected in the Ph.D. courses here.

COURSE	Ph.D. in English: Student Learning Outcomes							
	A. Recognize the significance of works, writers, and genres within British and American literary history.	B. Identify literary theory and critical methodology and produce literary interpretation informed by that theory and methodology.	C. Identify linguistic and rhetorical theories and methodologies and produce linguistic and rhetorical analyses.	D. Show pedagogical skill in the teaching of English language, literature, and composition.	E. Conduct digital research and use digital tools in teaching.	F. Use advanced research methods and produce oral and written scholarship and literary, linguistic, or rhetorical analyses.	G. Research problems within their primary field and propose, design, and produce a monograph-like dissertation.	H. Produce scholarship in a sustained program of research.
<i>Note:</i> course supports the outcome at the B=beginning, D=developing, or P=proficient level.								
Third Year, Fall, continued								
Post-1900 British, American, Postcolonial (ENGL 765, 783)	P	P				P	D	B
ENGL 696: Independent reading monitored by the Director of Graduate Studies—repeated as needed as student prepares for candidacy examinations						P	D	
Third Year, Spring								
ENGL 696						P	D	
ENGL 697 (6 hours): Second course of independent reading monitored by the Director of Graduate Studies—variable hours, repeated as needed during preparation for candidacy examinations						P	D	
Fourth Year-Fifth Years, Spring, Summer, Fall								
ENGL 799: Dissertation Hours						P	P	P

4. Assessment Methods: *Assessment Methods-by-Outcomes Matrix*

ASSESSMENT METHOD <i>Note: F=formative assessment, S=summative assessment, D=direct assessment, and I=indirect assessment</i>	Ph.D. in English: Student Learning Outcomes							
	A. Recognize the significance of works, writers, and genres within British and American literary history.	B. Identify literary theory and critical methodology and produce literary interpretation informed by that theory and methodology.	C. Identify linguistic and rhetorical theories and methodologies and produce linguistic and rhetorical analyses.	D. Show pedagogical skill in the teaching of English language, literature, and composition.	E. Conduct digital research and use digital tools in teaching.	F. Use advanced research methods and produce oral and written scholarship and literary, linguistic, or rhetorical analyses.	G. Conduct research on problems within their primary field, and propose, design, and produce a monograph-like dissertation.	H. Produce scholarship in a sustained program of research.
First Two Candidacy Examinations: Field Exams	S, D [if one or both fields are literary]	S, D [if one or both fields are literary]	S, D [if one or both fields are linguistics or rhetoric]			S, D		
Dissertation						S, D	S, D	S, D
External Evaluations						S, D	S, D	S, D
Student Evaluation of Teaching Assistants				S, I	S, I			
Employment				S, I			S, I	S, I
Department Survey of Alumni	S, I	S, I	S, I	S, I	S, I	S, I	S, I	S, I
NIU Alumni Survey	S, I	S, I	S, I	S, I	S, I	S, I	S, I	S, I

Explanation of Assessment Methods

Assessment Method	Explanation				
	Description	Student-Level Target ^a	Program-Level Target ^b	When Data Will be Collected	Person Responsible
First Two Candidacy Examinations: Field Exams	Evaluation of Ph.D. exams by faculty examining committees	Mastery of disciplinary knowledge and methodology specific to area, at level of competency (pass) or high competency (pass with distinction)	90% of students showing competency or high competency	Annually in spring, based upon Field Exams administered in August and January	Graduate Director and Graduate Assessment Committee
Dissertation	Evaluation of dissertation by English department readers outside dissertation committee	Mastery of research methods and of disciplinary knowledge and methodology specific to area, as measured by readers external to dissertation committee	90% of students receiving favorable assessment	Prior to program review	Graduate Director and Graduate Assessment Committee
External Evaluations of Research	Academic grants or fellowships, awards, research essays published in professional journals or presented at professional conferences	At least two such accomplishments for every graduate student by the beginning of 5 th year in program	90% of graduate students attaining the standard	Annually as students submit their c.v.'s to Job Placement Adviser	Placement Adviser and Graduate Director

Assessment Method	Explanation				
	Description	Student-Level Target ^a	Program-Level Target ^b	When Data Will be Collected	Person Responsible
Student Evaluation of Teaching Assistants	Summary of student evaluations of courses where Teaching Assistants are teachers of record	Mean score for all items evaluated greater than 4.0 on a 5.0 scale	90% of all Teaching Assistants meeting standard	Conclusion of each semester	First Year Composition and Undergraduate Directors
Employment	Record of job placement for Ph.D. graduates	Employment in sustainable long-term position: tenure-track job or equivalent	Percentage of tenure-track or equivalent employment above national average for English Ph.D. programs	Annually in spring	Graduate Director
Department Survey of Alumni	Questionnaire about experience at NIU in preparation for career	“Satisfied” or “Very Satisfied” on 80% of survey responses	90% of alumni respondents meeting standard	Every eight years; next survey to be conducted in 2016	Graduate Director
NIU Alumni Survey	Questionnaire about student satisfaction with an NIU experience	Agreement or strong agreement on 90% of relevant survey responses	Average of survey responses at or above 90% approval	1, 5, and 10 years after graduation	Assessment Office
<p>Note. ^a Student-level target is the score or performance that an individual student must demonstrate to say the student met the student learning outcome. ^b Program-level target is the percent of all students that must demonstrate they meet the student learning outcome.</p>					