

**UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL ARKANSAS**  
**ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT PLAN**  
Requirements, Template, and Example

**Requirements**

1. *Submit with New Program Proposal*
  - a. *Programs are encouraged to consult with the Office of University Assessment.*
  - b. *Contact information [assessment@uca.edu](mailto:assessment@uca.edu)*
2. *Send copy of Assessment Plan to the Office of University Assessment, Wingo 215.*
3. *Update the Program Assessment Plan based upon EAPR or Accreditation Cycles.*

**Basic Information**

Program Name: BA in English

College: College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

Department: English Department

Program Level (check all that apply)

- Associate's
- Bachelor's
- Undergraduate Certificate
- Master's
- Doctoral
- Graduate Certificate

Date Plan Submitted: Spring 2021

College Dean & email: Dr. Thomas Williams, [twilliams73@uca.edu](mailto:twilliams73@uca.edu)

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**1. Introduction** (identify college, unit, and degree programs)

- Purpose

The BA in English welcomes students into a community of learners immersed in the study of the English language, English-language literatures, and related cultural artifacts produced across the world from the middle ages to the present. This degree bolsters students' capacities to read and think critically, write analytically, and learn to disagree constructively. Because they spend so much time engaged in faculty-supported efforts to unpack the meaning of texts and contexts together, English students also become peculiarly adept at collaboration; in a spirit of fellowship, they learn to approach complex problems with nuance, creativity, and alacrity.

Likewise, because the degree introduces students to such varied cultures and ways of being in the world, studying English enhances students' comfort with and enthusiasm for diversity. Given that a 21<sup>st</sup>-century global economy demands strong readers and writers who collaborate readily and possess cosmopolitan sensibilities, the BA in English trains graduates for myriad career opportunities and graduate-school placements.

- Unit Mission Statement

The BA in English will:

- teach students about the periods, authors, genres, and critical theories germane to the study of English, American, and Anglophone literatures, as well as the English language itself.
- teach students to read closely and think critically about literary works in order to form a thorough understanding of those works, their complexities, and the relationships between those complexities and their own lives.
- teach students to conduct research, including the discovery, evaluation, integration, and documentation of primary and secondary sources.
- teach students to compose effective scholarly writing that presents arguments in clear, mechanically sound prose and supports those arguments with evidence drawn from primary and secondary sources.

## **2. Student Outcomes**

- Learning Outcomes by Program (focused on student performance, clearly stated, and measurable)

Students who pursue the BA in English will:

- demonstrate content knowledge of the periods, authors, genres, and critical theories germane to the study of English, American, and Anglophone literatures, as well as the English language itself. (Goal 1)
- demonstrate critical-reading and critical-thinking skills by examining a literary work and writing an essay on a literary topic relevant to that work which demonstrates intricate understanding of the text's form and meaning. (Goal 2)
- demonstrate skills in scholarly writing through effective prose that manifests originality of approach, soundness of structure, and clear, sophisticated prose. (Goal 3)

## **3. Assessment Cycle**

- Assessment Cycle will be determined with assistance from the Office of Assessment

Our direct methods of data generation hinge on the collection of artifacts via our ENGL 4335 Senior Seminar course every semester (see Item 5 for more information). Our indirect method of data generation involves a survey of alumni we will issue every three years. We will assess accumulated artifacts, collate resulting data, and close the loop every three years. In advance of each Existing Academic Program Review (EAPR), therefore, we will have completed at least three department-level assessment cycles. Our goal is to position the EAPR as our meta-assessment cycle, in keeping with its university-wide function.

## **4. Curriculum Map**

- Office of Assessment will provide examples and consultative services to meet this requirement. (See Appendix A)

## 5. Assessment Methods and Measures (Formative and Summative recommended)

- Record the assessment measure(s) that evaluate each student learning outcome (note: each learning outcome should have an associated assessment measure).
- Direct Methods/Measures Preferred/Used at the Course and Program Levels (examples: writing examples, oral examinations, internships, clinicals, quizzes, test, team/group projects and presentations)
- Indirect Methods/Measures Preferred/Used at the Course and Program Levels (examples: surveys, quantitative data, course grades, alumni surveys, student evaluation of instruction)

Direct Methods for SLOs 1-3: Students completing the BA in English take ENGL 4335 Senior Seminar during their final or penultimate semesters as undergraduates (whether fall, spring, or summer term). ENGL 4335 serves the capstone course for the BA in English and requires students to submit a portfolio at course's end. This portfolio must contain artifacts of that student's work that cut across classes which introduce, reinforce, and demand application of SLOs 1-3 (see Appendix B for a sample ENGL 4335 Senior Seminar portfolio prompt).

Students will submit copies of their portfolios—ungraded and with names redacted—to the English Department Assessment Committee (EDAC) for evaluation upon completion of ENGL 4335. The EDAC will use our department's Portfolio Assessment (see Appendix C) to score the students' artifacts. We will set as performance benchmarks the following three goals:

- (1) No fewer than 80 percent of our graduating BA in English students will have their ENGL 4335 essay score a 3 or higher (an "F" or "Fair") in each SLO category.
- (2) No fewer than 50 percent of our graduating BA in English students will have their ENGL 4335 essay score a 4 or higher (a "G" or "Good") in each SLO category.
- (3) We will see BA in English students growing, when we compare their scores in each SLO category for 2000-level essays and ENGL 4335 essays.

Indirect Methods for SLOs 1-3:

In addition to our portfolio-assessment work, the department also will assess the BA in English via a survey of alumni (see Appendix D). We will set the following goals as performance benchmarks:

- (1) Our mean score will be a 4 or higher on at least 75 percent of questions.
- (2) Our mean score will be a 3 or higher on at least 90 percent of questions.

## 6. Data Collection and Review

- When will data be collected for each outcome?

We will collect student artifacts for direct assessment at the conclusion of ENGL 4335 courses every fall, spring, and summer term. We will administer the alumni survey every three years.

- How will data be collected for each outcome?

The collection of ENGL 4335 artifacts requires basic coordination between ENGL 4335 professors, the EDAC, and the department chair. The administration of alumni surveys, on the other hand, will require coordination between the department and Institutional Research.

- What will be the benchmark/target for each outcome?  
See Section 5 for this information.

- What individuals/groups will be responsible for data collection?  
See Section 7 for this information.

## **7. Participation in Assessment Process**

- Who will participate in carrying out the assessment plan?

Operating under the direction of the department chair and the EDAC, all English instructors will participate to some degree in assessment. That said, the lion's share of coordinating assessment efforts will fall upon the chair and EDAC.

- What will be their specific role/s?

All full-time English faculty will have approval authority relevant to the creation, modification, and adoption of new program-assessment plans. Likewise, all faculty will be responsible, whenever appropriate and regardless of full- or part-time status, for gathering and submitting artifacts that fuel the assessment process. All faculty will digest assessment results and work recursively to improve departmental practices in light of those results. In other words, closing the loop is a jointly shared responsibility of all teaching faculty in the English Department.

The department chair and EDAC members serve as the pivot points for coordinating assessment efforts, as well as the primary personnel who compile data and communicate that data to the larger department.

## **8. Data Analysis**

- How will the data and findings be shared with faculty?

EDAC members and the department chair will tabulate and share assessment data with the larger department during each three-year assessment cycle. This will occasion department meetings to digest results and decide whether and how to implement plans for programmatic improvement. In addition, every trio of assessment cycles will function as the springboard for the EAPR.

- Who was involved in analyzing the results?

Primary responsibility for assessment-data analysis falls upon the EDAC and department chair. However, all English Department teaching faculty share responsibility for recursive programmatic improvement.

- How are results aligned to outcomes and benchmarks?

The emphasis of our assessment plan is on continuous programmatic improvement. For this reason, the processes by which we align results to outcomes and benchmarks does not differ in the event that results are highly positive, highly negative, or somewhere in between. We will use assessment results to occasion department-wide analyses of what's working, what isn't working, how we can maximize our strengths, and how we mitigate weaknesses. Such analyses could lead to changes in how we evaluate teaching, our curriculum, this assessment plan, and many other possibilities.

**9. Plan for Using Assessment Results to Improve Program**

- How will you use the results to improve your program?  
See Item 8, above.

**10. What are the plans to evaluate students' post-graduate success?**

See item 5, "Indirect Methods," above.

**11. What are the plans to evaluate teaching effectiveness?**

The English Department will add this assessment plan to an already robust array of tools we use to promote teaching effectiveness. Formative tools we use include peer observations of teaching, chair observations of teaching, peer review of syllabi and assignments, chair review of syllabi and assignments, and student evaluations of teaching. Summative measures we use include the annual-review and tenure-and-promotion processes. Our best means of promoting effective teaching, however, is a departmental culture of genuine, holistic, empathic care for students. This culture permeates everything we do, and it is one we must work hard to grow and sustain each day.

**12. Appendices-Required....Curriculum Maps by Program, Assessment Tools (examples: Rubrics, Surveys, Tests, etc.), any other important materials/documentation**

See below for the following appendixes:

Appendix A: BA in English Curriculum Map

Appendix B: ENGL 4335: Senior Seminar: Sample Portfolio Assignment

Appendix C: Portfolio Assessment Rubric

Appendix D: University of Central Arkansas Department of English Alumni Survey

**13. Submit Assessment Plan**

- Send completed form electronically to [assessment@uca.edu](mailto:assessment@uca.edu)

For questions or concerns please contact:  
Dr. Jacob Held 450-5307 [jmhheld@uca.edu](mailto:jmhheld@uca.edu)  
Alyson McEntire 450-5086 [amcentire@uca.edu](mailto:amcentire@uca.edu)

**Appendix A**  
**BA in English Curriculum Map**

	<b>SLO 1</b> Content Knowledge	<b>SLO 2</b> Critical Reading	<b>SLO 3</b> Analytical Writing
ENGL 2312 American Literature I	I	I	I
ENGL 2313 American Literature II	I	I	I
ENGL 2316 English Literature I	I	I	I
ENGL 2319 English Literature II	I	I	I
ENGL 3315 Gender and Language	I	I	
ENGL 3325 Advanced World Lit.	R	R	R
ENGL 3335 Lang. and Grammar	I	I	
ENGL 3345 Lit & Examined Life	R	R	R
ENGL 4301 Renaissance Lit.	R	R	R
ENGL 4305 Medieval Lit.	R	R	R
ENGL 4311 18 <sup>th</sup> -Cent. British Lit.	R	R	R
ENGL 4312 Early Am. Lit.	R	R	R
ENGL 4313 19-Cent. Am. Lit.	R	R	R
ENGL 4314 20 <sup>th</sup> -Cent. Am Lit.	R	R	R
ENGL 4320 19 <sup>th</sup> -Cent. British Lit.	R	R	R
ENGL 4321 20 <sup>th</sup> -Cent. British Lit.	R	R	R
ENGL 4325 Postcolonial Lit.	R	R	R
ENGL 4332 Shakespeare	R	R	R
ENGL 4335 Senior Seminar	A	A	A
ENGL 4340 Major Authors	R	R	R
ENGL 4360	I	I	

History & Structure			
ENGL 4361 Lit. for Adolescents	R	R	R
ENGL 4362 Southern Lit.	R	R	R
ENGL 4363 Adv. Film & Lit	R	R	R
ENGL 4366 Literary Theory	R	R	R
ENGL 4370 Gender & Sexuality	R	R	R
ENGL 4380 African/Af-Am Lit.	R	R	R
ENGL 4382 Race & American Lit.	R	R	R
ENGL 4383 Asian & Asian-Am. Lit.	R	R	R

I = Introduced; R = Reinforced; A = Applied

**Appendix B**  
**ENGL 4335 Senior Seminar**  
**Sample Portfolio Assignment**

**Senior Seminar: Romance as Genre**  
**Portfolio Assignment**  
**Description and Rubric**

The purpose of the portfolio assignment is to provide an opportunity to assess your own growth and evolution during the course of your undergraduate career. You should look at both your development as a literary scholar and as a writer by reviewing papers written earlier in your career and comparing them with your work now. While you're compiling the portfolio for that reason, the English Department's assessment committee will also use them to assess how well the BA in English program is helping students to develop. Most of the points for this portfolio will come from the thoughtfulness and depth of your self-assessment, which will be represented by the 500-word reflective essay and the self-assessment forms accompanying the other papers.

**Please remember to submit two copies of all the out of class papers if you want your portfolio returned. Here's what to include:**

1. **Ungraded copies of both papers written for this class, the close reading and the research paper.**
2. **At least one paper from a 2000-level survey course (ENGL 2312, 2313, 2316, 2319).** If you were a transfer student, this paper can be one written for your previous institution.
3. **At least one paper from a 3000- or 4000-level course.**
4. **One self-assessment paragraph appended for each item 1-3. See the attached page.**
5. **One 500-word essay that assesses your growth and development as a writer, thinker, and literary scholar over the course of your undergraduate career.** This essay should focus on your papers and use them to answer the following questions:
  - a. What strengths did you enter the program with and what strengths do you think you've developed while you've been here?
  - b. What weaknesses did you have and do you still have them or have you improved in any way?
  - c. What are the particularly valuable things have you learned being an English major?
  - d. What do you wish you had learned?

**Submit these documents to me as MS Word docs or PDF by email; do not use Google docs.**

RUBRIC: Here's how the point values for the portfolio will break down.

Inclusion of the two papers for this course:	0-20 points ____
Inclusion of one paper from a 2000-level survey course:	0-20 points ____
Inclusion of one paper from a 3000- or 4000-level course:	0-20 points ____
Self-assessment paragraphs, one for each item 1-4	0-40 points ____
Reflective essay	0-100 points ____

Total \_\_\_\_\_



The portfolio will be due at the same time as the research paper, **no later than the end of the day on Tuesday, December 8. It will count for a maximum of 150 points toward your final grade for the course.**

### **Student Self-Assessment Paragraphs, English Major Portfolio**

Append (enter as a new first page) the self-assessment paragraph as the first page of each item 1-3 (on the list above) in the portfolio. To do this:

1. Start at the top of the page. On the left margin, type your name, and then double space and type "Self-Assessment: Essay for [Instructor's name], [semester and year of the course]" (without the quotation marks or brackets, of course).
2. Type the paragraph, responding to the prompts below.
3. Once you have typed the paragraph, use "Insert: page break" to make it the new first page for that essay.

**Then in the paragraph, describe the following:**

- (1) What was your purpose in writing this paper (*persuasive, analytical, informational, interpretive*)
- (2) Describe the process you used to compose the paper.
- (3) What surprised you in the process of writing this paper?
- (4) How well do you incorporate primary and secondary source material into the paper?
- (5) What do you think the paper's most serious weaknesses are?
- (6) What do you think the paper's greatest strengths are?

## **Appendix C Portfolio Assessment**

**Portfolio Number:**

**Date of Review:**

### **SLO1: Content Knowledge**

**Ratings Defined:**

- E = Excellent = (5): Student demonstrates a thoroughgoing understanding of how a text or a discourse situates itself inside relevant traditions in American, Anglophone, and British literatures.
- G = Good - (4) Student demonstrates a growing understanding of a text's or a discourse's situatedness inside relevant traditions in American, Anglophone, and British literatures.
- F = Fair = (3) Student sees that texts and discourses are part of larger traditions (i.e., that they do not arise out of or speak to a vacuum). The student is beginning to make intriguing links between texts and discourses, based upon this understanding.
- P = Poor = (2) Student is working to internalize concepts related to texts' and discourses' relatedness, but is not yet effectively applying those concepts.
- U = Unsatisfactory = (1) Student approaches texts and discourses without a basic understanding of their connectedness.

**Score on essay from 2000-level course:**

**Score on essay from 3000- or 4000-level course:**

**Score on senior-seminar (ENGL 4335) essay:**

**Growth between 2000-level essay and senior-seminar essay:**

### **SLO 2: Critical Reading and Thinking**

**Ratings Defined:**

- E = Excellent = (5): Student demonstrates highly evolved skills in textual analysis. The student unpacks meaning at the level of overarching formal structures, as well as more localized uses of language. The student's insight consistently surprises the reader.
- G = Good - (4) Student demonstrates strong skills in textual analysis, although he or she

may struggle or lack sophistication occasionally. The student's insight sometimes surprises the reader.

F = Fair = (3) Student demonstrates commitment to intricate textual analysis, and is growing in terms of his or her skills. The student's insights rarely surprise the reader, but the student's conclusions are usually sound.

P = Poor = (2) Student demonstrates commitment to intricate textual analysis, but is a beginner in employing such analysis. Hence, the student's insights, while typically not unsound, are surface-level.

U = Unsatisfactory = (1) Student is not practicing, or is just commencing to practice, intricate means of textual analysis. His or her efforts yield exclusively or almost exclusively surface-level insight that may be off-base.

**Score on essay from 2000-level course:**

**Score on essay from 3000- or 4000-level course:**

**Score on senior-seminar (ENGL 4335) essay:**

**Growth between 2000-level essay and senior-seminar essay:**

### **SLO 3: Scholarly Writing**

#### **Ratings Defined:**

E = Excellent = (5): Student produces scholarly writing whose approach is highly original and whose structure is sound. The student's prose is lively and virtually error-free.

G = Good - (4) Student produces scholarly writing whose approach showcases some originality, whose structure suffers from few weak points, and whose prose carries the reader and does not feature errors that distract him or her.

F = Fair = (3) Student produces scholarly writing whose approach may lack originality, but whose structure is mostly sound. The student's prose generally is clear, but it occasionally distracts the reader with errors that cloud meaning.

P = Poor = (2) Student produces scholarly writing that does not surprise the reader, in terms of conceptualization. Likewise, the student's structure is uneven. The student's prose can be understood, but some errors may be significant enough or occur so frequently as to distract from meaning.

U = Unsatisfactory = (1) Student does not grasp the basics of writing for a scholarly audience in

terms of concept and structure. The student's prose does not carry the reader and features shortcomings in mechanics and grammar that undermine clarity.

**Score on essay from 2000-level course:**

**Score on essay from 3000- or 4000-level course:**

**Score on senior-seminar (ENGL 4335) essay:**

**Growth between 2000-level essay and senior-seminar essay:**

**Totals**

<b>SLO #</b>	<b>2000-level essay</b>	<b>3000- or 4000-level essay</b>	<b>ENGL 4335 essay</b>	<b>Growth</b>
SL01: Content Knowledge				
SL02: Critical Reading				
SL03: Analytical Writing				

**Appendix D**  
**University of Central Arkansas**  
**Department of English**  
**Alumni Survey**

*This survey is part of an evaluation of our academic programs. The English Department uses the information the survey generates to assess and improve our student advising, programs, and courses. If you wish to comment on any questions or qualify your answers, please feel free to use the space in the margins. Your comments will be read with interest. .*

**Section 1: Degree Earned at UCA**

1. What degrees did you earn at UCA? (Check all that apply)

- Master of Arts in English (M.A.)
- Bachelor of Arts in English (B.A.)
- Bachelor of Arts in English with Teaching Licensure (B.A.)

2. Did you earn a second major in addition to English?

- No
- Yes. Which discipline? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Did you earn one or more minors, in addition to your major(s)?

- No
- Yes. Please list minor(s): \_\_\_\_\_

4. What year did you receive your degree(s) from UCA? \_\_\_\_\_

**Section 2: Satisfaction with English programs**

**Please apply the following rubric: 5 Excellent; 4 Strong; 3 Good; 2 Weak; 1 Poor**

**2.1. The Diversity of the English Major Curriculum**

2.1.a. How ample an opportunity did the program give you to explore English literature?

5      4      3      2      1

2.1.b. How ample an opportunity did the program give you to explore American literature?

5      4      3      2      1

2.1.c. How ample an opportunity did the program give you to explore Anglophone literature?

5      4      3      2      1

2.1.d. How ample an opportunity did the program give you to study the linguistic aspects of English (e.g., history, structure, grammar)?

5      4      3      2      1

2.1.e. If you took part in extracurricular activities sponsored by the English department, such as the discussion groups and outings conducted by the English Club, how well did these supplement the curricular offerings in the English major?

5      4      3      2      1

2.1.f. What were the particular strengths and weaknesses of the English department's course offerings during your period of undergraduate study?

## **2.2. Library Resources Supporting the English Major**

2.2.a. What were the particular strengths and weaknesses of Torreyson Library's collections during your period of undergraduate study?

## **2.3 The English Major as Liberal Education**

2.3.a. How well did the classes that you took as part of your English major foster awareness of the cultural traditions of the English-speaking peoples?

5      4      3      2      1

2.3.b. How well did the classes that you took as part of your English major foster awareness of World cultural traditions transmitted in English translation?

5      4      3      2      1

2.3.c. How well did the classes that you took as part of your English major foster an appreciation of the importance for the citizens in a free society of reading and writing?

5      4      3      2      1

2.3.d. How well did the classes that you took as part of your English major foster an appreciation of the importance for the citizens in a free society of the skills of critical thinking?

5      4      3      2      1

2.3.e. How well did the classes that you took as part of your English major foster an appreciation of the importance for the citizens in a free society of a knowledge of our creative and intellectual traditions?

5      4      3      2      1

**2.4 The English Major and Teacher Preparation (Answer this section only if you currently teach school or have taught school following your completion of the English major.)**

2.4.1. How well did the classes that you took as part of your English major prepare you to read and critically interpret the literary texts that appear in your current classroom literature textbook?

5      4      3      2      1

2.4.2. How well did the classes that you took as part of your English major provide you with the knowledge of the cultural traditions that form the context(s) of the literary texts that appear in your current classroom literature textbook?

5      4      3      2      1

**2.5. The English Major and Post-Baccalaureate Study (Answer this section only if you have pursued a degree or certificate beyond the B.A. in English.)**

2.5.1. How well did the classes that you took as part of your English major prepare you to write effectively in the courses composing your subsequent degree program?

5      4      3      2      1

2.5.2. How well did the classes that you took as part of your English major provide you with the research skills required for success in your subsequent degree program?

5      4      3      2      1

2.5.3. How well did the classes that you took as part of your English major provide you with the critical thinking skills required for success in your subsequent degree program?

5      4      3      2      1

2.5.4. In what areas or skills did you feel either underprepared or particularly well prepared in your graduate career?

2.5.5 Where did you do your graduate work and what degree did you receive?

### **Section 3: Your Employment**

#### **3.1 Your present employment:**

Employer:

Job Title:

Brief Job Description:

How closely do you feel your major was related to this job?

- Closely related
- Somewhat related
- Not related at all

How much of the time do you enjoy the work you do?

- Almost all of the time
- Most of the time
- About half of the time
- Less than half of the time
- Almost never

What is your present income before taxes? (Do not include other family income.)

- \$0-\$19,999
- \$20,000-\$29,999
- \$30,000 - \$39,999
- \$40,000-\$59,999
- \$60,000-\$79,999
- \$80,000-\$99,999
- \$100,000 and above

### **Section 4: Courses you Took at UCA**

4.1 Which of the courses in your major stand out as especially helpful in your work?



4.2 Which of the courses outside of your major stand out as especially helpful in your work?

4.3 Which courses in the English Department are you happy you took for reasons other than work?

4.4 If you had it to do over again, would you choose to major in English?

Yes

No. I would major in \_\_\_\_\_

### **Section 5: Additional Comments**

Please feel free to comment frankly on any other aspect of your undergraduate English major at UCA.

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Thank you for taking the time and effort to complete our survey. The alumni survey is an important part of our ongoing process of program evaluation. Your contribution to this effort is greatly appreciated.