

English Major, ALCs AY 2016-2017

Academic Learning Compacts

Summary

The English major at USFSP has two tracks: Literature and Cultural Studies (LCSP) and Writing Studies (WSSP). Additionally, English houses a Creative Writing Certificate. Students in English are required to take classes in the other tracks as well as inside their area of specialization. As the Creative Writing Certificate has developed, many Writing Studies students take the required Creative Writing courses for the certificate. Additionally, the tracks and certificate share several, if not all, of the Academic Learning Compacts.

English conducts program-level assessments for both tracks of the major combined in ENC 3445: Introduction to the English Major and ENG 4950: Senior Portfolio. Students create electronic portfolios in ENC 3445 (taken in or prior to the first semester of the major) that an assessment committee of at least three readers evaluates using a 1-5 scale, with 3 equalling “meets expectations.” Students graduating from the program finalize those portfolios in ENG 4950 (taken in the last semester of the major) by including a sample of artifacts produced in the major and a reflective introduction. The assessment committee evaluates these portfolios using the same scale. English has as a goal a 75% rate of students scoring at least a 3/meets expectations.

Students may include essays, digital projects, multimodal compositions, informal writing, creative writing, videos of presentations and performances, and similar assignments in their portfolios. Individual instructors conduct their own course-level assessments on the ALCs for 3000- and 4000-level courses. Across the English major, some instructors use portfolios while others do not; however, in Writing Studies, all instructors use electronic portfolios for course assessment. The English program’s Assessment Committee gathers the information from course-level assessments to provide data on student learning between ENC 3445 and ENG 4950.

Mission Statement

The undergraduate degree in English Writing Studies track prepares students to work as innovative professional communicators in a variety of fields—from government to business to medicine. The program brings together professional and public discourse within specific rhetorical situations so that writers experience specific local, global, organizational, and civic dimensions. We research, develop, evaluate, and practice professional and public discourse. Students are encouraged to collaborate with schools, corporations, agencies, and community-based organizations to design, develop, use, and evaluate oral, written, and digital artifacts. The program is designed to empower individual communicators in the ethical and strategic use of language in a variety of public and professional communities. The program will produce graduates who can effectively compose using a variety of tools in order to communicate with their audiences. The undergraduate program in English Literature and Cultural Studies prepares students to be excellent communicators and researchers, whether they move forward into careers or into graduate and professional schools. The program highlights three areas of study – American, British, and World Literatures – focusing on specific kinds of skills: reading deeply and analytically, writing critically and creatively, thinking conceptually and contextually, and using multiple research tools from the archives to the Internet. Literature and Cultural Studies considers how language works in a variety of historical, rhetorical, and artistic contexts. Students who graduate from this program are both well situated and expected to be excellent, multifaceted users of language in the global communities they inhabit.

Program Goals/Objectives

We teach critical means of assessing textual audiences, purposes, contexts, and inquiry and research skills so that students and graduates can transfer their communication experiences from one rhetorical situation to the next. Students develop research projects through which they must answer their own research questions and in so doing understand the history of the problem as well as the current scholarly conversation.

Content/Discipline Knowledge and Skills

Graduates will be able to:

1. Recognize and apply disciplinary conventions, practices, terms, and theories.
2. Evaluate how language works in a variety of rhetorical, artistic, historical, and cultural contexts.

Content/discipline knowledge and skills are assessed at the course and program levels through portfolio assessment as well as the evaluation of individual assignments. In introductory classes students create electronic portfolios that house their works over their courses in the major. Students are encouraged to use a lengthy writing process that

requires multiple draft and feedback cycles across the semester, including peer review workshops. Skills are also assessed through observation of workshop skills and rubric used for assessment, and the rubric used for grading.

Communication Skills

Graduates will be able to:

1. Produce writing that shows a clear awareness of purpose, audience, and medium, through a writing process that involves reflection and/or revision (shared outcome with Literature and Cultural Studies and the Creative Writing Certificate)

Communication skills are assessed at the course and track levels through portfolio assessment as well as the evaluation of individual assignments. development of workshop and revision skills, peer reviewing all drafts of all assignments in small groups or as a class. Instructor also provides observation and recording of skills assessment.

Critical Thinking Skills

Graduates will be able to:

1. Demonstrate competence in analyzing and assessing digital, print, oral, and visual communication (shared outcome with Literature and Cultural Studies and the Creative Writing Certificate)

Critical thinking skills are assessed at the course and track levels through portfolio assessment as well as the evaluation of individual assignments. In Writing Studies classes, students are required to create at least one multimodal project that demonstrates digital, print, oral, and visual communication.

Civic Engagement

Graduates will be able to:

1. Recognize and value differences between multiple language users; determine ethical, responsible ways to bridge different cognitive and discourse communities.

Civic engagement is assessed at the course and track levels through portfolio assessment as well as the evaluation of individual assignments. Writing Studies offers ENC 3331: Client and Civic Communication, which specifically addresses civic engagement. Students in this class must create a project that demonstrated(demonstrates) community engagement, and follows the guidelines of the CCCCs Position Statement on Community Engaged Projects, including “important but not fully tangible outcomes” such as “accurate, fair, and informed peer evaluation of community-based projects.”

Goals for AY 17-18:

Because we recognize and value differences among multiple language users, we want students to be able to apply disciplinary conventions, practices, terms, and theories as they use language to successfully communicate in a variety of rhetorical and cultural contexts. Writers should compose with a clear awareness of purpose, audience, and medium, through a process that involves reflection and revision. Students will generate ideas and questions; pose problems; gather, synthesize, and evaluate data from a variety of sources (e.g., print and non-print texts, artifacts, people) to communicate these discoveries in ways suitable to broader academic conversations. Our goal is to graduate writers who can determine ethical, responsible ways to bridge different cognitive and discourse communities, using artifacts in electronic portfolios as evidence of our graduates' expertise in written, oral, digital communication.