

ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR

Master of Arts in English (MA) (Thesis and Non-Thesis)
Instructional Degree Program

Fall 2003
Assessment Period Covered

February 1, 2004
Date Submitted

Expanded Statement of Institutional Purpose Linkage:

Institutional Mission Reference:

Texas A&M International University, a Member of The Texas A&M University System, is committed to the preparation of students for leadership roles in their chosen profession and in increasingly complex, culturally diverse state, national, and global society ... Through instruction, faculty and student research, and public service, Texas A&M International University is a strategic point of delivery for well-defined programs and services that improve the quality of life for citizens of the border region, the State of Texas, and national and international communities.

College/University Goal(s) Supported:

To increase "(1) students' ability to communicate through the use of the written and spoken word; (2) their knowledge and appreciation of culture, fine arts, social integration; and (3) self realization. The College [COAS] also prepares students for a variety of professions and roles by providing a broad-based liberal arts education."

Intended Educational (Student) Outcomes:

- 1.** Graduates who apply to doctoral programs will be successful in obtaining admission.
- 2.** Graduates will have knowledge of literature that compares favorably to that of graduates from similar programs in the nation.
- 3.** Graduates will demonstrate their knowledge of literary theory and criticism and their skill in literary research through presenting papers at local and regional professional conferences and colloquia.

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1. Graduates who apply to doctoral programs will be successful in obtaining admission.

First Means of Assessment for Outcome Identified Above:

1a. Means of Program Assessment & Criteria for Success:

At least 80% of the graduates who apply for admission to doctoral programs in English or related fields (e.g., linguistics, composition and rhetoric, English education) will be accepted. Follow-up interviews will be used to collect data.

1a. Summary of Assessment Data Collected:

Two students in the M.A. in English program graduated in the fall of 2003. Neither of these students has begun the application process for admission to a doctoral program.

1a. Use of Results to Improve Instructional Program:

At this time, the faculty did not feel that there was sufficient data to warrant taking any action.

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2. Graduates will have knowledge of literature that compares favorably to that of graduates from similar programs in the nation.

First Means of Assessment for Outcome Identified Above:

2a. Means of Program Assessment & Criteria for Success:

Ninety percent of the graduates will score in the 70th percentile and above on nationally norm-referenced subject tests in English and literature (ACAT or MFAT).

2a. Summary of Assessment Data Collected:

The two graduate students who finished their program in fall 2003 had already taken the MFAT in spring 2003. The assessment results from spring 2003 are reproduced. Four graduate students and seventeen undergraduate senior English majors (14 B.A. in English and 3 B.A. in English with Sec. Certification) took the Major Field Assessment Exam (MFAT) published by ETS in spring 2003. The MFAT for Literature in English was revised in early 2003, and thus MFAT does not yet have national norms.

Overall, the four graduate students scored an average of 156 (Scale: 120-200) and the undergraduates scored an average of 144.7 (Scale: 120-200). The 4 analytical categories producing sub-scores (Scale: 20-100) follow:

Category	Graduate Ave.	Undergraduate Ave.
Literature before 1900	53.5	46
Literature after 1900	58.5	48.1
Literary Analysis	57.3	46.8
Literary History and Identification	54.8	46.7

2a. Use of Results to Improve Instructional Program:

Without national norms with which to compare the performance of our students, it is difficult to draw any firm conclusions about the meaning of the results that we have. These will have to await the emergence of patterns over a few years of testing. Nevertheless, some provisional conclusions seem justified -- for this group of graduate students and undergraduate seniors, at least. First, the range of difference on sub-scores (53.5 to 58.5 for graduates and 46 to 48.1 for undergraduates) is sufficiently narrow to suggest that in the broadest divisions of our discipline our students do not have any stand-out weaknesses -- or strengths. Second, our graduate students, as expected, consistently outperformed graduating undergraduate students, though the gap between them is narrower than one would want. Until more data becomes available, no changes in the graduate program will be taken.

Second Means of Assessment for Outcome Identified Above:**2b. Means of Program Assessment & Criteria for Success:**

At least 80% of the graduates will pass on the first attempt all portions of the comprehensive exam given at the end of their course-work for the degree.

2b. Summary of Assessment Data Collected:

Two students took comprehensive exams during fall semester 2003. Both students (100%) passed all portions of the comprehensive exam.

2b. Use of Results to Improve Instructional Program:

At this time, the faculty did not feel that there was sufficient data to warrant taking any action.

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3. Graduates will demonstrate their knowledge of literary theory and criticism and their skill in literary research through presenting papers at local and regional professional conferences and colloquia.

First Means of Assessment for Outcome Identified Above:

3a. Means of Program Assessment & Criteria for Success:

At least 60% of program graduates by their graduation will have presented a scholarly paper or participated in a panel discussion at a local or regional professional conference or colloquia.

3a. Summary of Assessment Data Collected:

One (50%) of the graduate students presented a paper at a local conference.

3a. Use of Results to Improve Instructional Program:

Faculty will provide graduate students with information about conference opportunities. Graduate students will be encouraged to present at the annual COAS Academic Conference.

SUPPORT DOCUMENTATION

SOURCE	LOCATION/Special Instructions