Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi

Detailed Assessment Report
2007-2008 MA English

Mission/Purpose
The MA in English emphasizes the theory, pedagogy, and methodology of composition and rhetoric. The degree is designed to develop accomplished teachers of English at the secondary and community college levels, to prepare skilled professional/technical writers, and to offer students the background and skills needed to begin doctoral study. The required core and elective courses include offerings in composition theory and practice, community literacy, technology and writing, linguistics, technical and professional writing, literature, literary theory, and creative writing.

Document:
MA Program Review 2001-2007

Student Learning Outcomes, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Achievement Targets, Findings, and Action Plans

O 1: Demonstrate literary proficiencies
Graduates of the MA in English Program will be able to demonstrate proficiency in critical reading, writing, and thinking at the graduate level.

Strategic Plans:
Texas A&M-Corpus Christi
1.1 Provide excellent academic programs & instruction.

Related Measures:

M 1: Comprehensive exam
All students take a written comprehensive exam over two of four reading lists that have been developed by the graduate faculty. In completing this exam, students write two essays in response to prompts that have been developed by the Comprehensive Examination and Capstone Committee, which is composed of a graduate faculty member representing each of the four exam areas. The examination committee evaluates the essays in terms of the ability they demonstrate to integrate, synthesize, and reflect critically on the readings.

Source of Evidence: Comprehensive/endo-of-program subject matter exam

Achievement Target:
(1) In 2006-2007, 70% of all students will be judged to demonstrate proficiency in critical reading, writing, and thinking at the graduate level on both exam sections in their first attempt. 90% of all students will be judged to demonstrate proficiency in these areas within their first or second attempts;
(2) In 2006-2007, 70% of all students will be judged to demonstrate understanding of core knowledge, vocabulary, and concepts in their first
attempt. 90% of all students will be judged to demonstrate this understanding within their first or second attempts.

**Findings (2007-2008) - Achievement Target: Met**

Fourteen students took the Comprehensive Exams to the exam in 2007-2008. 86% of the students passed both sections of the exam in their first attempt. One student passed one section of the exam on the second attempt. One student deferred to the next year to take both exams. Both students who failed the exams were male and Hispanic. The rubric was implemented by the examiners with more accurate assessment results.

**Findings (2006-2007) - Achievement Target: Not Met**

Eight students took the comprehensive exams in 2006-2007. 62.5% of all students passed both exam sections in their first attempt. 87.5% of all students passed both sections in their second attempt. We had no data breakdown for certain areas of proficiency because the rubric was not implemented until 2007.

**O 2: Demonstrate understanding of core concepts**

Graduates of the MA in English Program will be able to demonstrate understanding of core knowledge, vocabulary, and concepts in the discipline.

**Strategic Plans:**

Texas A&M-Corpus Christi
1.1 Provide excellent academic programs & instruction.

**Related Measures:**

**M 1: Comprehensive exam**

All students take a written comprehensive exam over two of four reading lists that have been developed by the graduate faculty. In completing this exam, students write two essays in response to prompts that have been developed by the Comprehensive Examination and Capstone Committee, which is composed of a graduate faculty member representing each of the four exam areas. The examination committee evaluates the essays in terms of the ability they demonstrate to integrate, synthesize, and reflect critically on the readings.

Source of Evidence: Comprehensive/end-of-program subject matter exam

**Achievement Target:**

(1) In 2006-2007, 70% of all students will be judged to demonstrate proficiency in critical reading, writing, and thinking at the graduate level on both exam sections in their first attempt. 90% of all students will be judged to demonstrate proficiency in these areas within their first or second attempts;

(2) In 2006-2007, 70% of all students will be judged to demonstrate understanding of core knowledge, vocabulary, and concepts in their first attempt. 90% of all students will be judged to demonstrate this understanding within their first or second attempts.

**Findings (2007-2008) - Achievement Target: Met**

86% demonstrated understanding of core knowledge, vocabulary, and concepts in their first attempt. One student was judged to demonstrate this understanding in the second attempt of one exam.

**Findings (2006-2007) - Achievement Target: Not Met**

Eight students took the comprehensive exams in 2006-2007. 62.5% of all students passed both exam sections in their first attempt. 87.5% of all students passed both sections in their second attempt. We had no data
breakdown for certain areas of proficiency because the rubric was not implemented until 2007.

**O 3: Demonstrate scholarly proficiency**
Graduates of the MA in English Program will be able to demonstrate proficiency in scholarly methods of research and inquiry.

**Strategic Plans:**
Texas A&M-Corpus Christi
1.1 Provide excellent academic programs & instruction.

**Related Measures:**

**M 2: Thesis or portfolio of writings**
Thesis students defend the thesis in an oral examination. As part of the ENGL 5395 Capstone experience, non-thesis students submit a portfolio of writings from other courses in the program. These portfolios are evaluated annually by the Comprehensive Examination and Capstone Committee to determine if students demonstrate proficiency in scholarly methods of research and inquiry.

Source of Evidence: Senior thesis or culminating major project

**Achievement Target:**
A majority of the committee members for each thesis student will judge the thesis and its defense passing. 85% of all capstone portfolios from spring 2007 will be evaluated as "proficient" or "very proficient" in scholarly methods of research and inquiry.

**Findings (2007-2008) - Achievement Target: Met**
The committee reviewed all seven portfolios from the Spring 2008 Graduate Capstone class. All (100%) of the portfolios contained an introductory essay or letter and three documented research paper/projects from three different courses within the program, at least one of which was in the program's field of emphasis (composition/rhetoric). All (100%) of the portfolios were rated Proficient or Very Proficient in terms of displaying or exemplifying proficiency in scholarly methods of research and inquiry.

**Findings (2006-2007) - Achievement Target: Partially Met**
77% of portfolios were rated Proficient or Very Proficient. 23% were Not Proficient. 100% of theses and thesis defenses were judged passing by a majority of the thesis committee members.

**O 4: Received appropriate preparation for career**
Graduates of the MA in English Program will have received appropriate preparation for individual career paths within the profession.

**Strategic Plans:**
Texas A&M-Corpus Christi
1.1 Provide excellent academic programs & instruction.

**Related Measures:**

**M 3: Exit interview**
At graduation, students self-assess their career preparation in the program exit interview held each spring.

Source of Evidence: Exit interviews with grads/program completers
Achievement Target:
85% of students graduating in May or August 2007 will report that they have received adequate career preparation.

Findings (2007-2008) - Achievement Target: Met
90% of the students graduating in 2007-2008 indicated they have received adequate career preparation. The Exit interviews are now conducted in the fall and spring, so we can more comprehensively assess our students.

Findings (2006-2007) - Achievement Target: Met
100% of the students graduating in May or August 2007 reported that they have received adequate career preparation.

M 4: Alumni Survey
The English program follows up with an alumni survey three years after graduation.

Source of Evidence: Alumni survey or tracking of alumni achievements

Achievement Target:
85% of alumni responding to survey will report that they received adequate career preparation.

Findings (2007-2008) - Achievement Target: Met
Given a need to more closely monitor minority student recruitment, success, and retention after reviewing data from the M.A. Program review, a qualitative survey was sent out to minority alumni students from three years ago requesting answers to the following questions: 1. How did you learn about our M.A. program and what sparked your interest in it? What was one of the key motivating factors in deciding to choose our program? How would you describe the mentoring you received from faculty and others in teaching and scholarship? What made you want to seek employment at TAMUCC for teaching/tutoring or other positions? How would you describe the professional relationships that you developed with your colleagues? Provide some names of graduate students that you interacted with the most during your graduate experience. What insights might you have in a graduate program such as ours to attract minority students? 100% of the students responded to the questions, and we are using some of their responses to help strengthen our minority recruitment and retention.

Findings (2006-2007) - Achievement Target: Partially Met
75% of alumni responding to the survey reported that they received adequate career preparation.

Other Outcomes/Objectives, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Achievement Targets, Findings, and Action Plans

O 5: Faculty creative and scholarly activity
English faculty teaching in the MA program will engage in scholarly and creative activity.

Strategic Plans:

Texas A&M-Corpus Christi
1.1 Provide excellent academic programs & instruction.
Related Measures:

M 5: Annual Faculty Reviews
Annual faculty reviews
Source of Evidence: Evaluations

Achievement Target:
(5) Given support for scholarship and creative activity by the College through workload releases and funding for professional travel, 50% of tenure-line faculty will attend a professional meeting in their specialty. 20% of tenure-line faculty will have a juried article, monograph or creative work accepted for publication, or present a scholarly paper at a regional or national professional meeting; (7) 100% of all tenure-line faculty will either serve on a university-, college-, or department-level committee or show involvement in associations or organized groups in the Corpus Christi community.

Findings (2007-2008) - Achievement Target: Met
100% of the tenure-line faculty attended a professional meeting related to their teaching and scholarship. 100% of the tenure-line faculty had an article, monograph or creative work accepted, or presented a scholarly paper at a regional or national meeting. 100% (16 of 16) tenure-line faculty were engaged in appropriate committee and civic engagement activities.

Findings (2006-2007) - Achievement Target: Met
93% of the tenure-line faculty attended a professional meeting in their specialty. 100% of the faculty had a juried article, monograph or creative work accepted for publication, or presented a scholarly paper at a regional or national professional meeting. 100% of the faculty served on a university-, college-, or department-level committee or showed involvement in associations or organized groups in the Corpus Christi community.

O 6: Provide instruction from visiting artists
Provide enriching instruction from visiting artists and scholars, as called for in 2001 MA program review and 2003 BA review.

Strategic Plans:

Texas A&M-Corpus Christi
1.1 Provide excellent academic programs & instruction.

Related Measures:

M 6: Number of presentations
Number of presentations from visiting scholars and artists
Source of Evidence: Activity volume

Achievement Target:
At least one formal presentation per semester (two each regular academic year) by distinguished visiting scholars or artists will be funded.

Findings (2007-2008) - Achievement Target: Met
In 2007-2008, the English Department brought in Emmy Perez, Denise Chavez, Sarah Cortez and T. Jackie Cuevas. All of the speakers specialized in creative writing or literature.

Findings (2006-2007) - Achievement Target: Met
In Fall 06, CMAR and the English Department brought to campus Victor
Villanueva, a distinguished scholar in Rhetoric. In Spring 07, we had three distinguished creative writing artists: Helen Viramontes, Oscar de los Santos, and Benjamine Alire Saenz.

O 7: Faculty service
Faculty will provide service to the university and Corpus Christi community.

Strategic Plans:

Texas A&M-Corpus Christi
1.1 Provide excellent academic programs & instruction.
1.2 Achieve targeted national prominence.

Related Measures:

M 5: Annual Faculty Reviews
Annual faculty reviews
Source of Evidence: Evaluations

Achievement Target:
(5) Given support for scholarship and creative activity by the College through workload releases and funding for professional travel, 50% of tenure-line faculty will attend a professional meeting in their specialty. 20% of tenure-line faculty will have a juried article, monograph or creative work accepted for publication, or present a scholarly paper at a regional or national professional meeting; (7) 100% of all tenure-line faculty will either serve on a university-, college-, or department-level committee or show involvement in associations or organized groups in the Corpus Christi community.

Findings (2006-2007) - Achievement Target: Met
93% of the tenure-line faculty attended a professional meeting in their specialty. 100% of the faculty had a juried article, monograph or creative work accepted for publication, or presented a scholarly paper at a regional or national professional meeting. 100% of the faculty served on a university-, college-, or department-level committee or showed involvement in associations or organized groups in the Corpus Christi community.

O 8: Recruit, support and graduate qualified students
Recruit, support and graduate well-qualified students in a timely way.

Strategic Plans:

Texas A&M-Corpus Christi
1.1 Provide excellent academic programs & instruction.

Related Measures:

M 7: SIS student records
SIS student enrollment records
Source of Evidence: Activity volume

Achievement Target:
Increase number of well-qualified students entering MA program by 2 per year (Sept).

Findings (2007-2008) - Achievement Target: Met
The increase in the number of well-qualified students was three per year from 13 to 16.
**Findings (2006-2007) - Achievement Target: Partially Met**
The increase in the number of well-qualified students was one per year from 12 to 13.

**M 8: Scholarship documents**
 Scholarship funding and documents
Source of Evidence: Document Analysis

**Achievement Target:**
Increase number of scholarships for entering MA students by at least 4 in 2006-2007, and five in 2007-2008 in order to make up for scholarships that were lost in 2005-2006 and to promote growth of program. At least 95% of the 2005-2006 scholarship budget (in dollars) will be available by December 1, 2006 to enable effective recruiting of well-qualified graduate students.

**Findings (2007-2008) - Achievement Target: Partially Met**
The number of scholarships increased by nine in 2007-2008 and included the summer scholarships that were awarded for new students. The notification of awards to the English Department did not occur until May 30th for the 2007-2008 (fall and spring) awards.

**Findings (2006-2007) - Achievement Target: Met**
The number of scholarships increased by 5 in 2006-2007. We received 16 scholarships in 2006-2007. The college was notified of the scholarships on February 24, 2006, and the English Department was notified shortly thereafter.

**Related Action Plans:**

**Early Notification of Scholarships**
It is imperative that the English Department receive early notification of the number of scholarships, so they can attract more students and compete with other schools. We will need to know by February of each year.

For more information, see the Action Plan Details section of this report.

**Request earlier scholarship allocation**
The notification of awards of graduate scholarships to the English Department did not occur until May 30th for the 2007-2008 (fall and spring) awards. We will ask for earlier notification from the graduate office.

For more information, see the Action Plan Details section of this report.

**M 9: 30-month graduation rate**
30-month graduation rate

Source of Evidence: Benchmarking

**Achievement Target:**
Achieve a 30-month graduation rate of at least 70%.

**Findings (2007-2008) - Achievement Target: Met**
90% of the students graduating in 2007-2008 completed their program within 30 months.

**Findings (2006-2007) - Achievement Target: Met**
87.5 percent of the students graduated within 30 months.
Details for Action Plans Established This Cycle

Early Notification of Scholarships
It is imperative that the English Department receive early notification of the number of scholarships, so they can attract more students and compete with other schools. We will need to know by February of each year.

Priority: High
Target Date: 02/2009
The English Department must be notified of the number of scholarships by February.

Responsible Person/Group: Graduate Studies Office

Request earlier scholarship allocation
The notification of awards of graduate scholarships to the English Department did not occur until May 30th for the 2007-2008 (fall and spring) awards. We will ask for earlier notification from the graduate office.

Priority: High
Target Date: 05/2009
End of Spring semester.

Responsible Person/Group: M.A. Coordinator in English

Analysis Answers

What specifically did your assessments show regarding proven strengths or progress you made on outcomes/objectives?
The portfolios showed that 100 percent of students were proficient in all areas. The faculty clearly demonstrated ongoing, successful scholarship in their fields.

What specifically did your assessments show regarding any outcomes/objectives that will require continued attention?
We need to press for earlier notification of scholarships in order to be competitive with other programs.

Annual Reports

Executive Summary
The MA program and faculty had a successful year, delivering quality instruction to an increasing number of graduate students, producing published scholarship related to faculty expertise and teaching, and completing a successful five-year program review. We became a National Writing Project Site (Coastal Bend Writing Project).

Public/Community Service
The graduate student organization SAGES participated in University Authors Day by teaching high school students from underserved populations. Some worked on writing grants for community agencies and non-profits with Dr. Etheridge.

Anticipated Challenges
We have reached the limits of our ability to deliver the English MA and BA curriculum, provide leadership to the College and University, and maintain our scholarly productivity without additional faculty resources. Of particular concern is maintaining quality of instruction and faculty engagement in the University's Writing Center. The increase in international students needing intensive instruction in basic language and
writing skills, plus the University's concern for retention, has created a demand which we cannot meet with our current number of Composition/Rhetoric faculty.

We need more scholarships and earlier notification of scholarship awards to help bring competitive graduate students into our program.

We see the need to advertise our MA program more broadly through print ad's in professional journals.

**Closing the Loop / Planned Actions**
Although the five-year review and our current assessment have identified no exceptionally difficult problems, the Graduate Committee, and then the Department faculty, will review the proposed Action Plans, as well as the assessment measures and desired outcomes, for effectiveness and currency in Spring semester 2009.

**Summary of Requested Resources**
We have recommended that the Dean and Director of the Learning Center ask for a faculty position in English to supervise and teach in the Writing Center. $60,000.

Four full-time instructorships - $200,000 - to support growth and quality of FYWP and Sophomore Core Literature.

Teaching enhancement - $4000
Visiting Artists and Scholars - $4500
Increased Library Funding - $760
Increased Professional Travel - $3400

**Administrative Unit Accomplishments**
The MA program completed a very successful five-year review in Summer 2008. The need for additional library materials to support the MA's new tracks, which was identified by this review, led to a special grant of HEF funds ($30,000) to purchase needed scholarly materials.

**Teaching Results / Accomplishments**
The MA introduced two new tracks in the MA program to build enrollments and meet the educational needs of the students. Literary Studies and Borderlands Studies were added to the Composition track to provide a wider range of opportunity as well as attract new students.

**Research/Scholar Activity Accomplishment**
100% of the tenure-line faculty had an article, monograph or creative work accepted, or presented a scholarly paper at a regional or national meeting. Seven scholarly monographs, novels or edited collections of scholarship were published by our faculty, or were accepted for publication. Four graduate students presented at national conferences in Rhetoric and Composition. One student won a Texas CCTE award for the best paper in Rhetoric, the paper will be published in CCTE.