

Institutional Effectiveness Report

Name of Program/Department:	English General Education Literature Curriculum
Year	2021-2022
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I. Program Mission

As defined in the Francis Marion University Course Catalog, “The General Education required of all students at FMU is designed to give students an introduction to the broad areas of knowledge essential to a successful life and career. Included in the General Education program are choices in the humanities, the social sciences, the laboratory sciences, and basic communications. Through this program, students begin to acquire an awareness of the diverse cultures of the past and present. They also develop communication, conceptualization, and analytical and critical thinking skills. These general education courses provide the foundation for the student’s declared major.”

Accordingly, the English Department’s General Education Literature Curriculum introduces students to a variety of fiction, poetry, drama and/or film. In learning to read, write, and think critically about a wide array of literary and filmic forms, the program helps students to appreciate, interpret, and analyze imaginative texts while also understanding how such texts relate to the human condition and the social and natural worlds around us.

II. Program Learning Outcomes

PLO 1 Expose students to a variety of texts, representative of various genres and time periods;

PLO 2 Stimulate interest in the study of literary texts;

PLO 3 Improve understanding of literary texts;

PLO 4 Increase ability to read texts from various formal and cultural perspectives;

PLO 5 Provide a quality learning experience.

III. Executive Summary

In the Spring of 2017 the English Department created the Sophomore Literature Assessment Committee to assess the department’s General Education Literature curriculum—which had previously not been assessed or evaluated. The committee

created an assessment method and piloted the method in an informal Summer pilot in 2018. A larger pilot was carried out in the 2018-2019 academic year. Minor revisions to the SLOs and assessment method were made following both pilots (See Appendix 1 for Pilot data).

This report details the committee's first formal assessment, which took place during the 2021-2022 academic year. The committee's first assessment had been scheduled to be carried out in the 2019-2020 academic year, but was postponed due to Covid-19. Given this is the first report on the department's General Education Literature curriculum, this report serves to establish a baseline for continued assessment of the curriculum. Benchmarks and targets will also be derived from the data gathered in this report and implemented in the next report.

The English department's General Education Literature curriculum consists of 4 courses: English 250: Introduction to Literature, English 250G: Introduction to Literature - Examining Depictions of Gender, English 251: Introduction to Film Studies, and English 252: Reading and Writing Fiction, Poetry, and Drama. Using a method of direct assessment, ten professors read 44 student responses from courses across the curriculum. (See Appendix 2 for student response requirements). For each response, three readers assigned a whole number score of 1-4 for each SLO: 4: Excels; 3: Satisfies the SLO; 2: Partially satisfies the SLO; 1: Fails to satisfy the SLO, or N/A: Not applicable (See Appendix 3 for score point indicator descriptions). All of the scores for each SLO were then averaged.

Based on department standards and the data from the two pilots, the committee set a tentative baseline of 2.49 for each of the five SLOs. This year's results were in-line with our estimations for establishing an accurate baseline:

- An average of 2.77 for SLO 1 (Interpret texts to reveal articulable meaning) exceeded the tentative baseline (2.49);
- An average of 2.55 for SLO 2 (Employ a basic critical vocabulary to analyze texts) exceeded the tentative baseline (2.49);
- An average of 2.86 for SLO 3 (Demonstrate how texts reflect social and/or cultural contexts) exceeded the tentative baseline (2.49);
- An average of 2.58 for SLO 4 (Write clear and convincing arguments about texts) exceeded the tentative baseline (2.49);
- An average of 2.43 for SLO 5 (Demonstrate an understanding of genre) did not meet the tentative baseline (2.49).

Using this data, the committee will set a baseline, benchmark, and target, for future assessment.

IV. Student Learning Outcomes

SLO 1: Interpret texts to reveal articulable meaning. The writing sample will demonstrate the student's ability to understand the main ideas or themes of texts and express those ideas or themes clearly. The student should be able to express insights that reveal the complexity of the text's meaning beyond simple affirmations or plot summary. The student is able to comprehend deeper implications of the text and state them accordingly.

SLO 2: Employ a basic critical vocabulary to analyze texts. The writing sample will demonstrate the student's ability to apply literary terms or other historical, critical, or philosophical concepts. The student will use these concepts to generate a particular understanding of a text, not merely in an ornamental manner.

SLO 3: Demonstrate how texts reflect social and/or cultural contexts. The student will demonstrate awareness of the text's social, artistic, and intellectual environment. The sample will contain evidence that the student understands the impact of context and craft.

SLO 4: Write clear and convincing arguments about texts. The student will demonstrate the ability to make a clear and convincing argument about the text. The writing sample will move beyond mere plot narration or recitation of obvious readings. The writing sample will have an argumentative goal supported by evidence culled from primary and/or secondary sources.

SLO 5: Demonstrate an understanding of genre. The writing sample will demonstrate the student's ability to recognize that texts are composed in different genres (fiction/poetry/film/non-fiction/drama). The student will discuss whether the piece adheres to or challenges genre conventions.

V. Assessment Method

A. Assessment Process

To directly assess the English department's General Education Literature curriculum, the committee collected 44 student responses from courses across the curriculum in the Fall 2021. All 44 student responses were gathered randomly. Students' names, course numbers, and section numbers were removed to ensure blind scoring. Assessors did not know the names of students or their respective instructors or section numbers.

Student responses were gathered from courses that were taught by 10 different English faculty members. These faculty members were a combination of members of the assessment committee and volunteers not on the committee who were teaching General Education literature courses.

Before the assessment period, assessors met to review procedures and to calibrate the scoring by discussing 2 sample student responses.

In the Spring semester, all 10 assessors read and scored 44 essays using the committee's Score Point Indicators (See Appendix 3). Each portfolio was assessed by three readers.

The committee will present the findings of the Assessment to the English Department in the Fall of 2022. After the report is distributed, the committee will meet to formally establish a baseline, benchmark, and target for all SLOs.

B. Assessment Standards and Scoring

Each student response was evaluated for all five SLOs.

- 1 - Interpret texts to reveal articulable meaning.
- 2 - Employ a basic critical vocabulary to analyze texts.
- 3 - Demonstrate how texts reflect social and/or cultural contexts.
- 4 - Write clear and convincing arguments about texts.
- 5 - Demonstrate an understanding of genre.

The assessor rated the student response with one of six scores:

Score 4: Excels.

Score 2: Partially satisfies the SLO.

Score 3: Satisfies the SLO.

Score 1: Fails to satisfy the SLO.

N/A (Not applicable)

C. Assessment Baseline, Benchmark, and Target

Baselines, benchmarks, and targets have not yet been established. Given the data from the pilots, the committee established a tentative baseline of 2.49 for this assessment.

The baseline, benchmark, and target for all SLOs will be determined by committee based on the data in this report.

D. Alignment with General Education Goals

As part of Francis Marion University's General Education curriculum, the English department's General Education Literature student learning outcomes align with the following goals:

- **Goal 1.** The ability to write and speak English clearly, logically, creatively, and effectively. [**SLO 1; SLO 4**]

- **Goal 2.** The ability to read and listen with understanding and comprehension. [SLO 1]
- **Goal 4.** The ability to explain artistic processes and evaluate artistic product. [SLO 2; SLO 3; SLO 5]
- **Goal 7.** The ability to recognize the diverse cultural heritages and other influences which have shaped civilization and how they affect individual and collective human behavior. [SLO 3]
- **Goal 9.** The ability to reason logically and think critically in order to develop problem-solving skills and to make informed and responsible choices. [SLO 4]

VI. Assessment Results

Below are the results of the committee's direct assessment of student responses. As previously noted, because this is the first formal assessment of the General Education Literature curriculum, we do not have an established baseline, benchmark, or target. Based on departmental standards and pilot data, the committee set a tentative baseline of 2.49.

Measure 1: Interpret texts to reveal articulable meaning. The writing sample will demonstrate the student's ability to understand the main ideas or themes of texts and express those ideas or themes clearly. The student should be able to express insights that reveal the complexity of the text's meaning beyond simple affirmations or plot summary. The student is able to comprehend deeper implications of the text and state them accordingly.

This SLO was scored a total of 124 times, yielding a 2.77 average. 63% of student responses exceeded the tentative baseline of 2.49. 23 of the responses (18.55%) received an average score of 4.0, the maximum. 53 responses (42.74%) received a score of 3, 43 responses (34.68%) received a score of 2, 4 responses (3.23%) earned a score of 1, 1 response (.081%) was marked N/A (not applicable).

Measure 2: Employ a basic critical vocabulary to analyze texts. The writing sample will demonstrate the student's ability to apply literary terms or other historical, critical, or philosophical concepts. The student will use these concepts to generate a particular understanding of a text, not merely in an ornamental manner.

This SLO was scored a total of 124 times, yielding a 2.55 average. 52% of student responses exceeded the tentative baseline of 2.49. 17 of the responses (13.71%) received an average score of 4.0, the maximum. 43 responses (34.68%) received a score of 3, 51 responses (41.13%) received a score of 2, 10 responses (8.06%) earned a score of 1, and 3 responses (2.42%) were marked N/A (not applicable).

Measure 3: Demonstrate how texts reflect social and/or cultural contexts. The student will demonstrate awareness of the text's social, artistic, and intellectual environment. The sample will contain evidence that the student understands the impact of context and craft.

This SLO was scored a total of 124 times, yielding a 2.86 average. 75% of student responses exceeded the tentative baseline of 2.49. 30 of the responses (24.19%) received an average score of 4.0, the maximum. 49 responses (39.52%) received a score of 3, 35 responses (28.23%) received a score of 2, 6 responses (4.84%) earned a score of 1, and 4 responses (3.23%) were marked N/A (not applicable).

Measure 4: Write clear and convincing arguments about texts. The student will demonstrate the ability to make a clear and convincing argument about the text. The writing sample will move beyond mere plot narration or recitation of obvious readings. The writing sample will have an argumentative goal supported by evidence culled from primary and/or secondary sources.

This SLO was scored a total of 124 times, yielding a 2.58 average. 61% of student responses exceeded the tentative baseline of 2.49. 16 of the responses (12.90%) received an average score of 4.0, the maximum. 53 responses (42.74%) received a score of 3, 42 responses (33.87%) received a score of 2, 13 responses (10.48%) earned a score of 1, and 0 responses were marked N/A (not applicable).

Measure 5: Demonstrate an understanding of genre. The writing sample will demonstrate the student's ability to recognize that texts are composed in different genres (fiction/poetry/film/non-fiction/drama). The student will discuss whether the piece adheres to or challenges genre conventions.

This SLO was scored a total of 124 times, yielding a 2.43 average. 36% of student responses exceeded the tentative baseline of 2.49. 14 of the responses (11.29%) received an average score of 4.0, the maximum. 33 responses (26.61%) received a score of 3, 61 responses (49.19%) received a score of 2, 10 responses (8.06%) earned a score of 1, and 6 responses (4.84%) were marked N/A (not applicable).

VII. Action Items

-Data gathered from the committee's first assessment will be used to set a baseline, benchmark, and target for all Student Learning Outcomes. The committee will determine future action items after completing the next assessment, which will include a baseline, benchmark, and target.

-We will evaluate the Assessment Instructions and Student Response Definitions to determine if the prompt is specific enough to address each SLO.

- We will evaluate SLO and Measure 5 (the lowest scored SLO) to determine if the score point indicator description accurately expresses the intended goal of the SLO.

-Finally, we will consider the efficacy of the N/A (not applicable) response for each SLO.

VIII. Appendices

1. Pilot Data
2. Assessment Instructions and Student Response Definitions
3. Score Point Indicator Descriptions

Appendix 1: Pilot Data**2019 Pilot:**

9 readers
44 essays

Measure	Average Score
1	2.65
2	2.43
3	2.85
4	2.58
5	2.53

2018 Pilot:

11 readers
46 essays

Measure	Average Score
1	2.75
2	2.67
3	2.51
4	2.70
5	2.38

Appendix 2: Assessment Instructions and Student Response Definitions
Literature General Education Assessment**ENG 250, 250G, 251, 252: Literature General Education–Collection of Student Papers Procedure**

The Sophomore Literature Assessment Committee asks that faculty teaching general education literature courses submit **unmarked copies** of one student response to an assignment from their English 250, 250G, 251, or 252 courses. The selected response should provide textual analysis argumentative in nature. This includes a standard interpretive essay or a reflection essay. Instructors should also submit a copy of the assignment for which students were asked to write the response.

Please submit five essays per class. To select essays, please access Patriot Portal and identify students 3, 7, 12, 17, and 20. Submit assignments from those students. If you do not have a student that has submitted an assignment that matches one of the above numbers, select the next student numerically on your roster. If you come to the end of your roster (for example if there is no student 20), consider student 1 to be the next student numerically.

Please remove identifiers (such as names/course/section numbers) and submit essays—via hard copy or email—to Jason Marley (jmarley@fmarion.edu) or Megan Woosley-Goodman (MWoosleyGoodman@fmarion.edu) by December 10th.

Appendix 3: Score Point Indicator Descriptions

SLO 1: Interpret texts to reveal articulable meaning;

The writing sample will demonstrate the student's ability to understand the main ideas or themes of texts and express those ideas or themes clearly. The student should be able to express insights that reveal the complexity of the text's meaning beyond simple affirmations or plot summary. The student is able to comprehend deeper implications of the text and state them accordingly.

Score 4: Excels. The student demonstrates a clear, deep understanding of the main ideas or key themes of the literary text. There is substantial depth and quality of thought evident in the sample. The sample does not rely on plot summary but is instead an insightful articulation of the text's meaning.

Score 3: Satisfies. The student demonstrates with some skill that a literary text has a main idea or theme. The student rises above factual summary to provide pertinent commentary. The student conveys a solid awareness of the literature's key themes or main ideas. There is minimal plot summary.

Score 2: Partially Satisfies. The student shows basic, somewhat limited ability to identify the main ideas or themes of the text but does not rely solely on plot summary.

Score 1: Fails. The student has difficulty rising above the level of plot summary and does not articulate the main ideas or themes of the text.

SLO 2: Employ a basic critical vocabulary to analyze texts;

The writing sample will demonstrate the student's ability to apply literary terms or other historical, critical, or philosophical concepts. The student will use these concepts to generate a particular understanding of a text, not merely in an ornamental manner.

Score 4: Excels. The student applies terminology effectively and does so in a way that is insightful and enhances the reader's understanding of the text.

Score 3: Satisfies. The student applies terminology accurately to the text.

Score 2: Partially Satisfies. The student includes some critical terminology but does not always explain or use these terms to foster a greater understanding of the text.

Score 1: Fails. The student does not include any critical terminology in the sample.

SLO 3: Demonstrate how texts reflect social and/or cultural contexts;

The student will demonstrate awareness of the text's social, artistic, and intellectual environment. The sample will contain evidence that the student understands the impact of context and craft.

Score 4: Excels. The student presents the text's context in a fully integrated manner and makes a solid case for the impact of the text on its context. The observations are original and/or is insightful.

Score 3: Satisfies. The student makes a solid case for the text's or context's significance, but this case is not fully integrated in the main focus of the paper, and/or the observations may be unoriginal, obvious, or divorced from other ideas developed in the text.

Score 2: Partially Satisfies. The student makes a weak case for social and/or cultural significance and does so in a mechanical way by introducing context without discussion of the implications to the text or the text's wider impact.

Score 1: Fails. The student does not mention the text is a part of a context, and/or the references made are inappropriate. The writing sample resists engagement with social and/or cultural significance.

Score N/A: This measure is not applicable

SLO 4: Write clear and convincing arguments about texts;

The student will demonstrate the ability to make a clear and convincing argument about the text. The writing sample will move beyond mere plot narration or recitation of obvious readings. The writing sample will have an argumentative goal supported by evidence culled from primary and/or secondary sources.

Score 4: Excels. The student has a clear argumentative focus supported by appropriate textual citations and analysis. The writing sample makes an argument about the text that is original and/or perceptive.

Score 3: Satisfies. The student contains an argument, but that argument is expected or obvious. The writer uses textual evidence to support the argument, and that textual evidence is effective to support the points. The majority of the points that are made are persuasive in nature although there may be some places the logic or explication is muddy or undeveloped.

Score 2: Partially Satisfies. The student has an argument, but it either lacks adequate support or the argument is not persuasive. The argument may be too reliant on plot summary.

Score 1: Fails. The student lacks textual evidence and/or an argument.

SLO 5: Demonstrate an understanding of genre.

The writing sample will demonstrate the student's ability to recognize that texts are composed in different genres (fiction/poetry/film/non-fiction/drama). The student will discuss whether the piece adheres to or challenges genre conventions.

Score 4: Excels. The student insightfully addresses the text's relationship to genre and demonstrates how a knowledge of genre enhances understanding of the text.

Score 3: Satisfies. The student articulates the relationship between the text and generic conventions but doesn't fully integrate these dimensions into the argument.

Score 2: Partially Satisfies. The student makes passing reference to a genre or form.

Score 1: Fails. The student fails to recognize the genre or form in which a text is written.

Score N/A: This measure is not applicable.