Assessing Student Learning in the English Major Capstone

ACE 10 Question

The English department has developed a set of learning outcomes and a programmatic assessment process for the English major that uses the English major capstone (an ACE 10 certified course required of all majors) as a collection site for student work to be assessed. The course includes two components. First, students are asked to look back on their work in the major and select samples covering a range of learning outcomes in the major to be included in a portfolio. Second, students engage in a common intellectual inquiry and produce substantial final projects key to the common inquiry. This final project then becomes a key component of the portfolio.

Method of Analysis

The English department has thirteen learning outcomes for majors. We score four outcomes every year (the foundational outcomes) and the additional outcomes on a rotating basis. This year, we will be scoring outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 11, and 13. Our scoring is conducted by a group of faculty from across the subdisciplines of English studies using a rubric. Our learning outcomes and the rubric for outcomes to be scored this year are represented below.

Outcomes for the English Major

1. demonstrate familiarity with a wide range of texts, writers, genres, and cultures.
2. read texts closely and attentively.
3. support claims they made in their writing with specific examples and evidence.
4. write and revise for a variety of purposes and audiences.
5. consider the significance of new ideas, textual/ literary practices in the context of their own lives and worlds, including their personal, academic, professional, and civic goals and purposes.
6. understand the importance of cultural differences in the study of texts and literary practices.
7. understand how texts and literary practices are shaped by their historical, social, cultural, intellectual, and aesthetic contexts.
8. set their own learning goals and understand their own learning.
9. identify and take critical positions on texts and literary practices with an understanding of what is at stake in assuming these positions.
10. use appropriate vocabularies for describing the work of writing (e.g., craft language for creative writing students, rhetorical language for rhetoric students)
11. conduct both primary and secondary research (including using the library) and understand the uses and limitations of the information yielded by various research methodologies.
12. understand how media and technology shape texts and literary practices.
13. write with clarity, grace, and voice appropriate to writing tasks.

Findings

Our scoring of student portfolios is scheduled to take place on APRIL 11th. Stay tuned!

Improving ACE 10 Learning

The English Department Assessment Coordinator and subject area coordinators, as appropriate, present the results of assessment activities the subject to the department, and, based, on department discussion and feedback, individuals or committees in the department may take action to improve teaching and learning or revise curricula.

ACE 10 Course: English 487

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