

Annual Assessment Report

Every department and school must submit an Annual Assessment Report to its Dean each year by June 1. A copy of the report is also submitted to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. This report summarizes progress in carrying out the Department/School assessment plan, analyzing key findings, and making program improvements.

The Annual Assessment Report should use the following format:

Writing

Annual Assessment Report

Department/School: LJML

Assessment period: (2011-12)

Assessment Plan Description:

1. **Expanded Statement of Purpose or Program Mission Statement:** *This section includes the program mission statement or expanded statement of purpose.*

Embodying the core values of a Christian liberal arts education in the Wesleyan theological tradition, and focusing on the power of language and story to shape us and our world, the LJML department and programs will provide students with knowledge, skills, and experiences to equip them to understand, interpret, analyze, evaluate, and create texts as linguistic and/or artistic expressions of diverse human experiences. We value reading, writing, researching, speaking, and discussing as profound means of participating in the redemptive work of God in all of creation.

2. **Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs):**

The following are the revised Program Learning Outcomes negotiated by the faculty in the Writing section during the 2011-12 assessment cycle. These more closely reflect both the aims of the Writing program and a further integrated system of outcomes moving outward from those of the program to the department's and finally the institution's. For more clarity on this alignment, attached to this report is an outcome hierarchy.

PLO 1: Students will apply creative and advanced skills in various forms and genres of writing.

PLO 2: Students will demonstrate knowledge of the conventions and terminology of creative and advanced writing within literary and non-literary texts.

PLO 3: Students will demonstrate knowledge of major literary-theoretical perspectives and terminology.

PLO 4: Students will develop connections between the literature and language studied and the contemporary world.

PLO 5: Students will engage writing and editorial processes through campus publications and external internships.

3. Curriculum Map:

Like the PLOs, the curriculum map for the Writing major was revised and clarified over the course of the 2011-12 assessment cycle. Building on those refined expectations, the progression of student learning from introductory knowledge to mastery is now clearly delineated over the span of courses required in the Writing major. This further definition of the learning path students are expected to follow led to further refinement in two categories. First, differentiating between courses where introductory, developing, and mastery level skill attainment is expected led to clearer unified Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) for the entirety of the major. A complete list of those CLOs is attached to this document. And second, the clarified curriculum map led to the identification of the courses where assessment data that will be most useful and telling can be found. This, in turn, has identified where summative capstone assessment is most appropriate. Attached is the revised curriculum map for further clarification.

4. Multi-Year Assessment Plan:

The Multi-Year Assessment Plan for the writing section was negotiated in the middle of the 2011-12 assessment cycle and is attached to this document. Based on that plan, the data that was collected in this time period came from the final collegiate portfolio completed in Writing 420, and exit information collected from student experience in the various campus publications and in the summative reviews completed at the end of all required off-campus internships. This data is on file with the Writing section coordinator and will be assessed via the existing criteria, which was not aligned with the more recently revised PLOs and CLOs. However, this year's collected data will be used to refine and revise assessment methodology that will include consideration of the new PLOs and CLOs and be applied to next year's data as well as to further refinement of the Writing PLOs and CLOs. That new methodology can be applied to all data on file as necessary as well.

Assessment Activities: *This section will be completed annually for each PLO measured during this Academic Year (as described in your Multi-Year Assessment Plan).*

5. Methods of Assessment and Criteria for Success:

As stated in the previous section of this report, data was collected to represent two of the five PLOs for the Writing major during the 2011-12 assessment cycle. In order to assess PLO 1 (see list above), all writing majors who took Writing 420 were required to complete a summative collection of a variety of their writing products over the course of their studies. This portfolio has been identified by faculty in the Writing section as the capstone assignment for the major and has been so unofficially for the past three years. At this point, the data from these portfolios will be assessed using the evaluation standards that were in place before the year began. Per the findings of and work completed during the current assessment cycle, these standards will be revisited in the fall of 2012 and revised in light of the more specifically aligned PLOs and CLOs created in the past year. Due to time and schedule constraints for a majority of members of the Writing section, the assessments of those portfolios will not be completed until after the submission of this report.

PLO 5 (see list above) was also identified for data collection over the course of this assessment cycle. That collection was to be completed by instructors of these courses in connection with students' work in the three campus publications via Writing 215, 216, and 217. The measurement tool for this collection is still being constructed and as such, a standardized collection of data in regards to this PLO was not completed. However, the measures of assessment that have been employed for student work and experience in these courses previously were employed and will be used to refine how data will be collected in relation to the campus publications courses in future assessment cycles. Similarly, data was collected via supervisorial reviews of students who took part in required off-campus internships via Writing 470. These reviews have been employed for several years and collect useful data, though it is not aligned specifically with the newly revised PLOs and CLOs. This data indicates, in many ways, exactly the type of information needed to assess whether or not a student has displayed mastery level skill attainment as now described in the CLO for the course. However, the language of the device does not closely enough adhere to that of the assessment language the new outcomes employ. As such, the data collected this year will be used to revise the supervisorial review forms so as to align them with the PLOs and CLOs moving forward.

6. Summary of Data collected:

In summary, the data for the courses being assessed during the 2011-12 cycle was collected via the methods that have been employed to this point. All students who took Writing 420 completed comprehensive portfolios that are kept in physical and digital forms by the head of the Writing section, to be reviewed in the future. The internship evaluations for students who completed Writing 470 are also on file with the internship coordinators. As stated earlier, the device for standardizing the data collection from Writing 215, 216, and 217 are still under consideration. As has been stated before, due to the need for clarifying the structural outcomes for the program and each individual course in the major it is now clear how assessment measures need to be aligned moving forward. Thus, the first order of business in the coming year will be the creation of those assessment devices in rubric and other forms. The data from this year will be assessed as it has been to this point and used to make the improvements and alterations to those existing measures where they can be made and serve as the foundation for any new assessment devices that must be constructed.

7. Use of Results:

In brief summary, the results of this year's data collection have primarily resulted in illuminating the ways in which the Writing major's assessment scaffolding needed to be revised and standardized across the curriculum. The result of this was the generation of unified sets of Program and Course Learning Outcomes aligned along the lines of both course-specific planning needs and section-wide assessment measures. Also, it created a clearer picture of the moments of assessment already in place still in need of integration with one another and with a more unified set of outcomes. As a result, the Writing section now has the ability to devise more effective and consistent measures to track student progress and success and is already in the process of doing so. Additionally, the work done this year has helped create a road map for ways in which current data collection needs to be revised. Specific needs in CLO and PLO-aligned rubric and survey designs will be the next step in the process, and the current system of collecting the same data will act as the starting point for redeveloping these measurement devices that can be employed when next these PLOs are assessed in the six-year cycle. This work also provides a specific vantage point with which to design the assessment tools for collecting data for the next PLOs to be reviewed in the coming academic year.

Those devices will be in place and the data they provide will be more clearly reviewable in the course of the coming year than was possible in the current assessment cycle. Further, in the coming year, the Writing section will discuss dissemination of what the data is telling us, both to the LJML Department proper and to students within the program. One current way that the work done during the current assessment cycle is being shared is in providing students with the specific and revised CLOs in the coming school year, a move that will allow greater clarity in terms of the expectations regarding their work and development as a writer and student.