Weber State University
Biennial Report on Assessment of Student Learning

Cover Page

Department/Program: Master of Arts in English
Academic Year of Report: 2020/21 (covering Summer 2019 through Spring 2021)
Date Submitted: 15 November 2021
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We have updated the Institutional Effectiveness website, which includes an update for each program page. All Biennial Assessment and Program Review reports will now be available on a single page. Please review your page for completeness and accuracy, and indicate on the list below the changes that need to be made. Access your program page from the top-level <u>results</u> page. Select the appropriate college and then your program from the subsequent page.

A. **Mission Statement**

   <u>X</u> **Information is current; no changes required.**

   Update if not current:

B. **Student Learning Outcomes**
   (please note the addition of certificate and associate credential learning outcomes)
   ___ **Information is current; no changes required.**

   Update if not current: Under certificates, the website lists a certificate in Professional and Technical Writing. We do not offer this certificate at the graduate level. It can be deleted. All other information is correct.

C. **Curriculum** (please note, we are using Google Sheets for this section so that updates are easier to make)

   ___ **Information is current; no changes required.**

   Update if not current (you may request access to the Google Sheet if that is easiest, or we can make the updates):

       I have requested access to the Google Sheet.

D. **Program and Contact Information**

   ___ **Information is current; no changes required.**

   Update if not current:
   The program info under this tab lists our old mission statement. It should be updated to the new mission, which is accurate in the mission statement tab.

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The current contact info has not been updated as requested 2 years ago. It should read…
Dr. David Hartwig, graduate program director
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E. Assessment Plan

We have traditionally asked programs to report on outcome achievement by students at the course level. We are encouraging programs to consider alternative assessment approaches and plans that are outcome-based as opposed to course-based, though course-based assessment can continue to be used. A complete assessment plan will include a timeline (which courses or which outcomes will be assessed each year), an overall assessment strategy (course-based, outcome-based, reviewed juries, ePortfolio, field tests, etc.), information about how you will collect and review data, and information about how the department/program faculty are engaged in the assessment review.

___ **Information is current; no changes required.**

Update if not current:
The MA Steering Committee evaluates all syllabi the semester prior to a course being offered, emphasizing the scope and focus of the course, the quality, quantity, and currency of course readings, the clarity of the relationship between course assignments and the course learning outcomes, the workload, and compliance with university guidelines on syllabi.
Students in their final semester submit the final paper from the 6010: Intro to Graduate Studies course, which is their report on the research project they designed and implemented in that course, and is written to be delivered at a scholarly, professional, or creative conference. Additionally, students submit a portfolio of three additional written products of their choosing which are representative of their work in the program. The MA Steering Committee assesses all of these artifacts each fall against the program learning outcomes.
The program asks students to report on all publications they achieve that began as academic work in the program. This can include review articles, work delivered at scholarly, professional, and/or creative conferences and symposia, creative publications, and scholarly articles. The program emphasizes the importance of publication to the success of graduate students, and has the goal of encouraging students to publish at increasing frequency and in high-quality outlets.

F. Student Achievement

    i. Percent of students completing degrees after 90 credit hours within 2 years and a reflection on that metric
       This metric is not relevant to graduate programs.

Evidence of Learning

Evidence of Learning						
Measurable Learning Outcome. Students will…	Method of Measurement. Direct Measures	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results	Closing the Loop
LO1: gather, analyze, & communicate information & insights creatively & critical	Measure 1: MENG 6010 final paper Measure 2: portfolio	Measure 1 & 2: 80% Meets/Exceeds Expectations	Measure 1: 17/18 Meets/Exceeds Expectations (94%) Measure 2: 46/49 Meets/Exceeds Expectations (94%)	Measure 1: Threshold Met Measure 2: Threshold Met	No action at this time	The program agreed that our curriculum is strong in this area, and this LO has carried over into our new emphasis areas.
LO2: cultivate skills in close reading, critical thinking, creative expression, & persuasive writing	Measure 1: MENG 6010 final paper Measure 2: portfolio	Measure 1 & 2: 80% Meets/Exceeds Expectations	Measure 1: 16/18 Meets/Exceeds Expectations (89%) Measure 2: 46/26 Meets/Exceeds Expectations (94%)	Measure 1: Threshold Met Measure 2: Threshold Met	No action at this time	The program agreed that our curriculum is strong in this area, and this LO has carried over into our new emphasis areas.
LO3: understand & apply various theoretical perspectives & discipline-specific terminology to interpretations of texts &/or analysis of data	Measure 1: MENG 6010 final paper Measure 2: portfolio	Measure 1 & 2: 80% Meets/Exceeds Expectations	Measure 1: 15/18 Meets/Exceeds Expectations (83%) Measure 2: 25/34 Meets/Exceeds Expectations (74%)	Measure 1: Threshold Met Measure 2: Threshold Not Met	The persistent shortfall on the LO led directly to curriculum revision.	As the program revised its curriculum into emphasis areas (should be approved for next catalog year), we made MENG 6030: Literary and Critical Theory a required course for students in the Literature emphasis, and removed this LO from the Creative Writing emphasis.
LO4: acknowledge & articulate the significance of key text(s) in specific genres, periods, cultures, styles, or theoretical perspectives	Measure 1: MENG 6010 final paper Measure 2: portfolio	Measure 1 & 2: 80% Meets/Exceeds Expectations	Measure 1: 15/18 Meets/Exceeds Expectations (83%) Measure 2: 42/48 Meets/Exceeds Expectations (88%)	Measure 1: Threshold Met Measure 2: Threshold Met	No action at this time	The program agreed that our curriculum is strong in this area, and this LO has carried over into our new emphasis areas.
LO5: demonstrate knowledge of current scholarship & practices	Measure 1: MENG 6010 final paper Measure 2: portfolio	Measure 1 & 2: 80% Meets/Exceeds Expectations	Measure 1: 15/18 Meets/Exceeds Expectations (83%) Measure 2: 33/43 Meets/Exceeds Expectations (77%)	Measure 1: Threshold Met Measure 2: Threshold Not Met	The persistent shortfall on the LO led directly to curriculum revision.	Our curriculum revision will provide students with a stronger foundation in current scholarship through the new shared Core, as well as requiring all Literature students to take all three of our literary seminars, and allowing Creative Writing students to focus further on practical application in their workshop courses.

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| LO6: employ discipline-specific conventions & protocols for written or multimodal presentations | Measure 1: MENG 6010 final paper Measure 2: portfolio | Measure 1 & 2: 80% Meets/Exceeds Expectations | Measure 1: 16/18 Meets/Exceeds Expectations (89%) Measure 2: 44/49 Meets/Exceeds Expectations (90%) | Measure 1: Threshold Met Measure 2: Threshold Met | No action at this time | The program agreed that our curriculum is strong in this area, and this LO has carried over into our new emphasis areas. |

Additional narrative (optional – use as much space as needed):

 Beyond these LO-based assessment data, the program also conducts a syllabus review prior to each course being taught. This has been especially helpful in raising the achievement level for LO5, emphasizing that faculty need to be selecting the most recent and relevant research for courses. This was not a significant problem, but there have been some courses that needed to be revised to meet contemporary standards.

 Additionally, the program considers student publication to be an essential measure of our success as a program. Roughly 60% of students express a desire to pursue a terminal degree (PhD or MFA) during their entrance interview, and publishing (defined as presenting at conferences, symposia, or other public venues; public readings of creative work; print/digital publication of non-peer reviewed work; and print/digital publication of peer review work) is an essential part of success at the next academic level, and becoming increasingly necessary to gain entry to highly-ranked terminal degree programs in the field. We have asked students to self-report their successes in this area:

Olsen, Sherilyn. "Making a Mosaic from 'The Shattered Mirror': Observing the Shift in Identity Politics from Negritude to Afropolitanism Through Select African Poetry." Uniport International Conference on Language and Literature, University of Port Harcourt, Democratic Republic of Congo, 2019.

Bian, Chengyuan. Review of *Home Remedies* by Xuan Juliana Wang. *The Book Smuggler's Den*, 25 June 2019.

Page, Blakely. "Scope of Reason." *The Palouse Review*, 2 Dec. 2019.

Guy, Erin. "Beaver 2.0: Challenging and Solving WID/WAC Commonplaces with Genre and Online Writing Pedagogy." Poster Session at the Conference on College Composition and Communication, 25-28 March 2020.

Cruz, Elissa. Review of *Dragon Lords: The History and Legends of Viking England* by Eleanor Catherine Parker. *Journal of Folkore Research*, 4 Feb. 2021.

Benson, Francia Henriquez. "Dracula: a Narrative of Mental Illness in its Different Manifestations." Children of the Night: The International Dracula Congress, 16-18 Apr. 2021.

Farris, Mashaela. "'That so wicked mouth': Rabies, Nymphomania, and the Monstrous New Woman in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*." Fifth Annual Ann Radcliffe Academic Conference at StokerCon2021, 21 May 2021.

Stevens, Amanda. Review of *The Wife Upstairs* by Rachel Hawkins. *The Comparatist*, vol. 45, Oct. 2021, pp. 382-385.

 We know that this list is incomplete, especially in terms of creative publications, but it will take some time to instill in students a culture of reporting their successes to the program.

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Appendix A

Most departments or programs receive a number of recommendations from their Five/Seven-Year Program Review processes. This page provides a means of updating progress towards the recommendations the department/program is enacting.

Date of Program Review: Sept. 2020	Recommendation	Progress Description
Recommendation 1	As the program transitions to including more online course offerings, we recommend that the Steering Committee develop best practices for intention and planned student engagement including orientation, advising, and professional socialization with faculty and other MEng students.	2020 +1 progress: we have implemented an orientation program for new students, which occurs twice per year in December and August, and plan to expand that to conclude with program-wide social event once it is safe to again gather in large groups; we have implemented advising (see below); we have implemented several professional/social events (including socials before/after visiting writers and scholars, and a PhD preparation event).
Recommendation 2	We also recommend that the mission statement be rephrased to reflect its intention to recruit and train students from beyond the local community.	2020 +1 progress: we completed a revision of the mission and it is now updated and implemented.
Recommendation 3	Formalize the tracks within the MEng program into official concentrations and/or graduate certificates (for some of the tracks) that will appear on the students' diplomas.	2020 +1 progress: we have submitted proposals to convert our two largest tracks (Lit and CW) into emphasis areas. We plan to finalize a proposal to convert our secondary licensure track into an English Teaching emphasis during Sp22 for implementation the following year, and converting the TESOL track into a graduate certificate on roughly the same timeline.
Recommendation 4	We recommend that the MEng program require all new students to take MENG 6010 in their first semester to orient them	2020 +1 progress: we strongly advise students to take this course in their first semester, however we have allowed for

	to the program and connect them with other students.	some flexibility in cases where students' schedules do not allow them to take the course on a given day/time.
Recommendation 5	We also recommend that MENG 6010 should better reflect with equal weight all four of the different program concentrations rather than be primarily focused on the Literature concentration.	2020 +1 progress: this had already been done prior to the site visit, so I'm unsure why the team made this recommendation.
Recommendation 6	We recommend eliminating the remaining dual-designations courses (5000-level courses) from the MEng program.	2020 +1 progress: we cannot completely eliminate all 5000-level courses, as they provide necessary access to students who do not have undergraduate degrees in English in the form of leveling courses. We did, however, eliminate a large number of these that we do not intend to utilize as leveling courses.
Recommendation 7	The Review Team recommends that, as the MEng faculty work on developing formalized concentrations for each emphasis area, the assessment of each concentration should be considered as well.	2020 +1 progress: we utilized assessment data in the formulation of new emphasis-specific LOs for the newly proposed Lit and CW emphases, and will continue to do so with the remaining elements of our curriculum.
Recommendation 8	We also recommend that the MEng faculty revise its current assessment program to provide more immediate feedback to the students and to better reflect the learning outcomes of the program.	2020 +1 progress: the program considers its assessment and student feedback separately. Students receive ample and timely feedback in the form of grades on their assignments, which via syllabus review we have ensured are all tied clearly to LOs. We think the holistic approach to program assessment (student LO achievement, student publication achievement, and syllabus review) is a very effective means of assessing the success of our program.

Recommendation 9	We also recommend that the program use the outstanding accomplishments of the students to market the program to prospective students and to continue to build the program's scholarly reputation in the community.	2020 +1 progress: we have already implemented this via our social media channels, and will continue to do so as we transform the culture around students self-reporting their scholarly and creative successes.
Recommendation 10	In the interest of better retention and student success after graduation, the Review Team recommends that the college consider hiring an academic advisor who could devote some or all of their time to advising graduate students in the college (MEng and MPC). Until that is financially feasible, we recommend providing Kate Johnson, the Administrative Specialist, with additional opportunities for training in advising, within and outside of the university as available and applicable. We recommend that the requirement of first-year students to meet with the Administrative Specialist be clarified in order to eliminate confusion on the part of students regarding the program requirements and the course sequences. Furthermore, we recommend that, at the start of their second year, students be required, rather than only encouraged, to meet with the Program Director or supporting faculty designated by the Director. That second-year meeting should involve direct discussion of student career goals and perhaps some form of action plan for each student.	2020 +1 progress: the program has provided the administrative specialist with additional opportunities for training, our orientation program has helped eliminate any confusions regarding program requirements/course sequences, we maintain rigorous advising of students, although we do not want to make advising mandatory. We do fully support the college hiring an academic advisor who could dedicate some/all of their time to graduate program advisement, and generally support hiring more professional advisors for undergraduate programs, as well.

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Recommendation 11	The Review Team recommends that the program director, in partnership with the WSU Diversity Office, develop strategies to recruit diverse faculty when openings occur. The easiest opportunity for diversifying the faculty would come from developing a stronger online component to the program, as this would allow for hiring diverse faculty from outside the local community.	2020 +1 progress: the program does not hire its own faculty, so this is a mooted recommendation, though we do fully support diversity initiatives across campus. We do not feel that hiring diverse adjuncts is any kind of solution, as it will further exacerbate systemic inequities.
Recommendation 12	While the program has been able to secure more funding recently for scholarships, the enrollment growth will result in additional financial need for graduate students. The Review Team recommends that the college seek out donors who are interested in endowing scholarships for graduate students.	2020 +1 progress: the program has continued to call for further fund-raising for donors.
Recommendation 13	We recommend that the program implements processes to ensure continuity when transitioning to new leadership and/or administration.	2020 +1 progress: the director and administrative specialist have compiled a program calendar, which serves as a handbook for program leadership. It includes tasks that need to be accomplished in each month, along with links to the forms or instructions for each task.
Recommendation 14	Rework the MEng website to focus it more on prospective students only and consider creating a Canvas course geared to provide pertinent information for current graduate students. This would essentially function like an internal website and could also be used for announcements.	2020 +1 progress: we have revised the website to make it more oriented toward prospective students, and created an internal Google Site for current students. We are unaware of any ghost websites remaining. The website is now updated regularly with the most up-to-date information, as are

	We also recommend that old versions/iterations of the MEng website be removed from weber.edu to avoid confusion and to improve web searching by current and potential students.	informational pages on the program's internal Google Site.
Recommendation 15	We recommend the creation of a newsletter to share information about student achievements, highlight program events, maybe even introduce new students. This newsletter (or a shorter version of it) could also be shared with MEng alumni. Highlighting alumni achievements to current students would help with retention and also make alumni continue to feel connected to the program, which would make it easier for MENG to collect data on alumni success.	2020 +1 progress: we publish a monthly newsletter during the academic year, and once during the summer months, with vital information for students (including kudos for publications, graduation announcements, intro of new students, upcoming deadlines, class offerings, etc.). We have begun an e-mail list for program alumni who also receive this newsletter. The problem we are facing in terms of tracking alumni success is that we do not have accurate contact info for all alumni (210+), and there is very little/no institutional support for the process of alumni relationships on a program level.
Recommendation 16	We recommend that MEng develop an external advisory board that can provide feedback to the faculty on the development of the concentration areas and seek advice to help recruit additional students, and more diverse students, to the program to further grow the enrollment. An external advisory board would also help provide continuity and stability during future transitions.	2020 +1 progress: in our response, the program rejected this recommendation as an immediate need, but is open to revisiting this recommendation in the future.
Recommendation 17	We also recommend that MEng devise a plan for better tracking of MEng alumni and career placement, and continue to	2020 +1 progress: see above re: institutional support. We are have best

	reach out to MEng alumni to track their career paths as well as to invite them to remain engaged in the program through mentoring, guest lectures, and/or participation in the external advisory board.	plan in place that we can manage with the limited resources we have.

Additional narrative:

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Appendix B

Please provide the following information about the full-time *and adjunct faculty* contracted by your department during the last academic year (summer through spring). Gathering this information each year will help with the headcount reporting that must be done for the final Five Year Program Review document that is shared with the State Board of Regents.

Faculty Headcount	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
With Doctoral Degrees (Including MFA and other terminal degrees, as specified by the institution)			
Full-time Tenured	16	15	17
Full-time Non-Tenured (includes tenure-track)	10	8	7
Part-time and adjunct	1	1	1
With Master's Degrees			
Full-time Tenured	0	0	0
Full-time Non-Tenured	1	2	2
Part-time and adjunct	0	0	0
With Bachelor's Degrees			
Full-time Tenured	0	0	0
Full-time Non-tenured	0	0	0
Part-time and adjunct	0	0	0
Other			
Full-time Tenured	0	0	0
Full-time Non-tenured	0	0	0
Part-time	0	0	0
Total Headcount Faculty			
Full-time Tenured	16	15	17
Full-time Non-tenured	11	10	9
Part-time	1	1	1

Please respond to the following questions.

1) Review and comment on the trend of minority students enrolling in your classes (particularly lower-division, GEN Ed) and in your programs.
   We have seen an increase in students identifying as minority students in the past two years, particularly students from minoritized ethnic populations, non-traditional students (although this has long been the case for our graduate program), and students who identify as LGBTQIA+. We offer a diversity scholarship of $500 per semester to students who apply, represent diversity, and have unmet financial need. We have managed to retain and graduate nearly all of these students in the past two years, only losing one who decided to transfer to a program at another institution after their first year.

2) What support (from enrollment services, advising, first-year transition office, access & diversity, etc.) do you need to help you recruit and retain students?
   Any support we can get in terms of recruiting students would be wonderful. Currently, the entirety of our recruitment efforts have been conducted by the program faculty and staff.

3) We have invited you to re-think your program assessment. What strategies are you considering? What support or help would you like?
   We have already begun to implement a more holistic assessment process. Firstly, the revision of our LOs to be emphasis-specific will help provide stronger feedback to the program faculty regarding our curricular successes. We will continue to do LO-based program assessment utilizing 6010 and portfolios as we have done for the past two years. Secondly, we continue to assess courses before they are offered through our syllabus review process. This has been very successful in encouraging faculty to engage with the most recent and most relevant research in their respective sub-fields as learning materials for our graduate students. Finally, we consider student publication to be an essential element of our program. We have begun asking students to self-report their success in publication to the program, and are encouraging faculty to work with students on co-authored projects. These will be the three pillars of our self-assessment going forward: LO assessment, syllabi review, and student-authored publication.

4) Finally, we are supporting our Concurrent Enrollment accreditation process. Does your program offer concurrent enrollment classes? If so, have you been able to submit the information requested from the Concurrent Enrollment office? Staff from OIE will reach out to you in the next few months to assist in finalizing that data submission as well as gather information for concurrent Gen Ed assessment.
   Not applicable.

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Glossary

Student Learning Outcomes/Measurable Learning Outcomes
The terms 'learning outcome', 'learning objective', 'learning competency', and 'learning goal' are often used interchangeably. Broadly, these terms reference what we want students to be able to do AFTER they pass a course or graduate from a program. For this document, we will use the word 'outcomes'. Good learning outcomes are specific (but not too specific), are observable, and are clear. Good learning outcomes focus on skills: knowledge and understanding; transferrable skills; habits of mind; career skills; attitudes and values.
-    Should be developed using action words (if you can see it, you can assess it).
-    Use compound statements judiciously.
-    Use complex statements judiciously.

Curriculum Grid
A chart identifying the key learning outcomes addressed in each of the curriculum's key elements or learning experiences (Suskie, 2019). A good curriculum:
-    Gives students ample, diverse opportunities to achieve core learning outcomes.
-    Has appropriate, progressive rigor.
-    Concludes with an integrative, synthesizing capstone experience.
-    Is focused and simple.
-    Uses research-informed strategies to help students learn and succeed.
-    Is consistent across venues and modalities.
-    Is greater than the sum of its parts.

Target Performance (previously referred to as 'Threshold')
The level of performance at which students are doing well enough to succeed in later studies (e.g., next course in sequence or next level of course) or career.

Actual Performance
How students performed on the specific assessment. An average score is less meaningful than a distribution of scores (for example, 72% of students met or exceeded the target performance, 5% of students failed the assessment).

Closing the Loop
The process of following up on changes made to curriculum, pedagogy, materials, etc., to determine if the changes had the desired impact.

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Continuous Improvement
An idea with roots in manufacturing, that promotes the ongoing effort to improve. Continuous improvement uses data and evidence to improve student learning and drive student success.

Direct evidence
Evidence based upon actual student work; performance on a test, a presentation, or a research paper, for example. Direct evidence is tangible, visible, and measurable.

Indirect evidence
Evidence that serves as a proxy for student learning. May include student opinion/perception of learning, course grades, measures of satisfaction, participation. Works well as a complement to direct evidence.

HIEE – High Impact Educational Experiences
Promote student learning through curricular and co-curricular activities that are intentionally designed to foster active and integrative student engagement by utilizing multiple impact strategies. Please see https://weber.edu/weberthrives/HIEE.html