

## **ASSESSMENT REPORT 2014-2015**

### **English Graduate**

(Instructional Degree Program)

### **M.A.**

(Degree Level)

#### **Program Mission:**

The mission of the Department of English and Philosophy is to provide quality education leading to intellectual growth and professional success. In regards to “intellectual growth,” the program is committed to preserving, interpreting, and promoting the unique multicultural heritage of the region, and achieves this both the range of classes offered and the kind of unique theses our students complete, many of which are focused on the literary, creative, and composition aspects of the Southwest. In regards to “professional success,” the graduate program serves regional secondary school teachers, prospective community college teachers, students who plan to enter PhD programs, and students who seek stronger credentials in English for careers in journalism, publication, and professional writing. Each year, graduate assistantships are awarded competitively to full-time students. Along with tutoring in the Writing Center, graduate assistants undertake extensive teacher training in composition and gain considerable experience as composition instructors.

#### **Student Learning Outcome 1:**

Students will produce high-quality written work demonstrating their interpretative and analytical skills through mastery of relevant and current theoretical concepts.

#### **NMHU Traits Specifically Linked to Student Learning Outcome 1**

#### **First Means of Assessment for Outcome 1:**

Learning Outcome #1 is assessed by evaluation of a student’s written work at three key points in their academic career: their qualifying exam, their thesis proposal, and their thesis. The two English faculty department members, utilizing a form, score these written works on a scale of 1-5 based on Quality of Written Work. These three scores are averaged, and a score of 3.5 or higher is considered success. Specifically, 100% of English MA graduates will average a 3.5 or higher for “Quality of Written Work.”

#### **Summary of Data:**

Number of Students Meeting Criterion:	3	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion:	1
Total Number of Students Assessed:	4	Percent of Students Meeting Criterion:	75%

**Second Means of Assessment for Outcome 1:**

Learning Outcome #1 is further assessed by evaluation of a student's written work at three key points in their academic career: their qualifying exam, their thesis proposal, and their thesis. The two English faculty department members on the student's committee will, utilizing a form, score these written works on a scale of 1-5 based on Mastery of Relevant and Current Theoretical Concepts. These three scores are averaged, and a score of 3.5 or higher is considered success. Specifically, 100% of English MA graduates will average a 3.5 or higher for "Mastery Relevant and Current Theoretical Concepts."

**Summary of Data:**

Number of Students Meeting Criterion:	3	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion:	1
Total Number of Students Assessed:	4	Percent of Students Meeting Criterion:	75%

**Interpretation of Results for Outcome 1:**

Faculty agreed that while 75% of graduate students in English met the criteria, it was still not an acceptable number since we want all our students to meet all criteria before they complete their MA in English. As a result, we have decided to add some language to our MA English Program Handbook requiring graduate students to complete a full draft of their thesis by the end of mid-term break if they wish to graduate in May. This deadline will provide students with more time to revise their thesis --and so improve their writing and mastery of relevant and current theoretical concepts --before they submit their project for evaluation and hold their oral thesis defense. The end result may be that some students do not graduate until the following fall, but their work will be of a higher quality and not compromise the integrity of the MA Program. The department is also considering a revamp of the thesis requirements to reflect current national trends, and such modifications might also enable students to graduate in two years while meeting all the learning outcomes for graduate study in English.

**Student Learning Outcome 2:**

Students will display mastery of the subject and form of their chosen concentration area (Literature, Creative Writing, or Linguistics and Composition).

**NMHU Traits Specifically Linked to Student Learning Outcome 2****First Means of Assessment for Outcome 2:**

Learning Outcome #2 is assessed by evaluation of a student's work at four key points in their academic career: their qualifying exam, their thesis proposal, their thesis defense, and their thesis. The two English faculty department members on the student's committee will, utilizing a form, score these works on a scale of 1-5 based on Mastery of the Subject and Form. These four scores are averaged, and a score of 3.5 or higher is considered success. Specifically, 100% of English MA graduates will average a 3.5 or higher for "Mastery of the Subject and Form."

### **Summary of Data**

Number of Students Meeting Criterion:	3	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion:	1
Total Number of Students Assessed:	4	Percent of Students Meeting Criterion:	75%

### **Interpretation of Results for Outcome 2:**

Faculty agreed that while 75% of graduate students in English met the criteria, it was still not an acceptable percentage since we want all our students to meet all criteria before they complete their MA in English. As a result, we have decided to add some language to our MA English Program Handbook requiring graduate students to complete a full draft of their thesis by the end of mid-term break if they wish to graduate in May. This deadline will provide students with more time to revise their thesis – and so master the subject and form of their chosen concentration area --before they submit it for evaluation and hold their oral thesis defense. The end result may be that some students do not graduate until the following fall, but their work will be of a higher quality and not compromise the integrity of the MA Program. The department is also considering a revamp of the thesis requirements to reflect current national trends, and such modifications might also enable students to graduate in two years while meeting all the learning outcomes for graduate study in English.

### **Student Learning Outcome 3:**

Students will be able to conduct, synthesize, interpret, document, and present original academic research.

### **NMHU Traits Specifically Linked to Student Learning Outcome 3**

### **First Means of Assessment for Outcome 3:**

Learning Outcome #3 is assessed by evaluation of a student's written work at three key points in their academic career: their qualifying exam, their thesis proposal, and their thesis. The two English faculty department members on the student's committee will, utilizing a form, score these written works on a scale of 1-5 based on "Ability to

Conduct, Synthesize, Interpret, and Document Research.” These three scores are averaged, and a score of 3.5 or higher is considered success. Specifically, 100% of English MA graduates will average a 3.5 or higher for “Ability to Conduct, Synthesize, Interpret, and Document Research.”

#### **Summary of Data**

Number of Students Meeting Criterion:	3	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion:	1
Total Number of Students Assessed:	4	Percent of Students Meeting Criterion:	75%

#### **Second Means of Assessment for Outcome 3:**

Learning Outcome #3 is further assessed by evaluation of a student's written work at three key points in their academic career: their qualifying exam, their thesis proposal, and their thesis. The two English faculty department members, utilizing a form, score these written works on a scale of 1-5 based on “Originality of Research or Creative Project.” These three scores are averaged, and a score of 3.5 or higher is considered success. Specifically, 100% of English MA graduates will average a 3.5 or higher for “Originality of Research or Creative Project.”

#### **Summary of Data**

Number of Students Meeting Criterion:	4	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion:	0
Total Number of Students Assessed:	4	Percent of Students Meeting Criterion:	100%

#### **Interpretation of Results for Outcome 3:**

Faculty agreed that while 75% of graduate students in English met the criteria for conducting, synthesizing, interpreting, and documenting research, it was still not an acceptable percentage since we want all our students to meet all criteria before they complete their MA in English. As a result, we have decided to add some language to our MA English Program Handbook requiring graduate students to complete a full draft of their thesis by the end of mid-term break if they wish to graduate in May. This deadline will provide students with more time to revise their thesis before they submit it for evaluation and hold their oral thesis defense. The end result may be that some students do not graduate until the following fall, but their work will be of a higher quality and not compromise the integrity of the MA Program. The department is also considering a revamp of the thesis requirements to reflect current national trends, and

such modifications might also enable students to graduate in two years while meeting all the learning outcomes for graduate study in English. All students met the second means of assessing outcome 3, which focused on the originality of students' research or creative projects, indicating that in this crucial area, the graduate program is very successful.