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Review of the MFA Results and Report on Curricular Change B.A. English Education

Reviewing results of student comments on the SLU Exit Survey, we find our English Education Majors well satisfied with the quality of their teachers overall, particularly the individual care and attention their teachers give. In the last Exit Survey (1998-1999), over 77% of English Education Majors judged themselves "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied" with the effectiveness of the faculty as teachers, and 66.6% were "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied" with the interest shown by faculty in the student's academic development. In preparation for advanced courses, 77.8% judged themselves "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied," and 88.8% were "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied" with the quality of instruction in advanced courses. The Exit Survey also indicates that 77.8% of English Education Majors are "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied" with the overall quality of their degree program. As one student commented on the Survey, ". . . I learned quite a bit that has broadened my knowledge of English literature."

Further providing assessment of English Education Majors' competency in language and literature and in teaching those subjects, the English Department maintains the policy that all English Ed Majors must maintain a C or better in all English courses, particularly in English 467, "The Teaching of Writing," and in English 468, "The Teaching of Literature." On the PRAXIS exam, English Ed Majors graduating in fall 2000 and spring 2001 who took the exam averaged a 178 on the content specialty test sections, "English Language, Literature, and Composition: Content Knowledge" and "English Language, Literature and Composition: Pedagogy. In addition, over 90% of the fall 2000 and spring 2001 graduates scored at least a 3 on the appropriate indicators of the Student Teacher Evaluation and Attribute Scale, all meeting our department's goals. Those students who took the NTE instead of the PRAXIS averaged 657 on the Communication Skills section, above the required score of 645, and 661 on the General Knowledge section, above the 644 required score.

In the area of scholarly research and criticism, the department continues to require a thorough knowledge of research and MLA documentation format beginning in English 102. Critical papers and/or research papers are required at every level of the major courses, and these are also evaluated for correct use of MLA documentation. Well over 80% of English Education Majors anticipating graduation in the next two semesters have a B or better in LS 102, also demonstrating research competency.

In the area of plans after graduation, 100% of those English Education Majors taking the 1998-1999 Exit Survey who were not preparing for graduate school indicated they were seeking employment and 11.1% were applying to graduate school.

Improving our English Education Majors' global awareness and multicultural knowledge, the English Department has recently hired two new tenure-track professors, one specializing in World Drama and the other in Literature of the Americas. They will only add to the many courses specified in our Assessment Plan focusing on literature and culture from a global perspective. Meanwhile, our faculty encourages students to take advantage of the several Study Abroad programs offered by SLU which will provide valuable real-life encounters with the places and people inspiring our literary studies to add to research and classroom experience.

One possible area for improvement, according to student ratings in the Exit Survey, is availability of required and elective courses in the students' major. In both these categories, 44.4% gave a rating of "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied," indicating our department must evaluate the types of course offerings each semester to assure required courses are readily available. This problem can also be addressed through careful academic advising, so that the student might plan future semesters with course availability in mind.