

Review of the MFA Results and Report on Curricular Change 2008

B.A. English Education

Reviewing results of student comments on the Southeastern 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 two Exit Surveys (2005-2006 and 2006-2007), over 84% of English Education Majors (2006: 92.3%; 2007: 77%) judged themselves “Satisfied” or “Very Satisfied” with the effectiveness of the faculty as teachers, and 88.4% (2006:84.6%; 2007: 92.3%) were “Satisfied” or “Very Satisfied” with the interest shown by faculty in the student’s academic development. In preparation for advanced courses, almost 77% (2006: 84.6%; 2007:69.3%) judged themselves “Satisfied” or “Very Satisfied,” and 84.65% (2006:92.3%; 2007: 77%) were “Satisfied” or “Very Satisfied” with the quality of instruction in advanced courses. The Exit Survey also indicates that 88% (2006: 100%; 2007: 76.9%) of English Education majors were “Satisfied” or “Very Satisfied” with the overall quality of their degree program.

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 taking the test from September 1, 2006 through August 31, 2007 averaged a 172 on the content specialty test sections, “English Language, Literature, and Composition: Content Knowledge” and a 150 on “English Language, Literature and Composition: Pedagogy, both within or above our goal scores. In addition, over 90% of the fall 2007 and spring 2008 graduates scored at least a 3 on the appropriate indicators of the Student Teacher Evaluation and Attribute Scale, all meeting our department’s goals.

In addition, one critical research paper from a 300- or 400-level course was collected from each English Ed graduating senior and evaluated on 8 criteria judging language and literary expertise. The criteria are scored by the following scale:

1. Below adequacy
2. Adequate
3. Good
4. Excellent

The average scores for each criterion for the most recent group of papers is below:

Focused topic	3.0
Clear thesis/argument structure	2.58

Organization: development, transition, coherence, supporting evidence	2.67
Sense of Audience	2.0
Valid interpretation of primary text	2.19
Correct incorporation of secondary sources / use of MLA Doc. (for LAS Majors, of a formal documentation style)	1.25
Sentence sophistication / effective use of voice and diction	1.50
Mechanics / grammatical correctness	1.62

English Ed students fell below our goal of 2.0 for the last 3 criteria, indicating a need to adjust our classes to better emphasize correct research process and documentation, more mature writing style, and grammatical correctness. 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. However, sample papers indicate the students must work harder to master research skills.

Well over 80% of English Education majors anticipating graduation in the past two semesters earned a B or better in LS 102, also demonstrating research competency. In the exit survey, 92.3% (2006: 92.3%; 2007: 92.3%) of English Ed majors judged themselves Satisfied or Very Satisfied in their knowledge of how to use library resources, especially in the field of English.

In the area of plans after graduation, English Ed graduates are not included in the most recent Alumni surveys so we cannot determine employment/graduate school plans.

Improving our English Education majors' global awareness and multicultural knowledge, not only do several of our courses address multi-cultural literature, but also our faculty encourages students to take advantage of the several Study Abroad programs offered by Southeastern, which will provide valuable real-life encounters with the places and people inspiring our literary studies to add to research and classroom experience. Two faculty members in our department lead study abroad trips, both focusing on cultural awareness, language, and literature. An average of 3.54% (2006: 7.7%; 2007: 0%) of surveyed English Education majors had participated in study abroad/exchange programs and were Satisfied or Very Satisfied with the experience. In addition, 76% (2006: 84.6;

2007: 69.3%) of English Education majors rated themselves Satisfied or Very Satisfied with the global perspective of their courses.