

Effective: April 2010

**Major Field Assessment Plan  
MA in English**

The mission of Southeastern Louisiana University is to lead the educational, economic, and cultural development of southeast Louisiana.

The purposes of the MA in English at Southeastern are to provide training in research techniques and critical writing; to provide intensive study in certain areas of specialization; to prepare the student for teaching and/or doctoral study; and to encourage and support advanced study of the humanities.

**Goal 1:**

MAs in English will know a broad range of British, American, and World literary texts, authors, genres, and critical traditions in their aesthetic, cultural, and historical contexts.

- A. Expected Outcome: MAs in English will be able to demonstrate their knowledge of literary texts, authors, genres, and critical traditions through discussion, research, and writing in at least three designated courses.

Assessment

MAs in English must pass at least one graduate course from each of three defined historical periods: ancient/medieval/early modern, eighteenth/nineteenth centuries, twentieth century and contemporary.

- B. Expected Outcome: MAs in English will be able to write comparatively about texts, authors, genres, and critical traditions in their historical and cultural contexts.

Assessment

MAs in English must pass one section of the MA Comprehensive Exam which requires students to produce an essay in a timed two-hour period. The question is designed individually from the courses each student has taken in the three defined periods.

**Goal 2**

MAs in English will be able to write knowledgeably about literature and effectively in the practice of a profession.

- A. Expected Outcome: MAs in English will produce well-written essays on literary texts and texts appropriate to their chosen professional areas.

Assessment

1. MAs in English must pass a writing-intensive course for one professional area of English; the coursework centers on a series of writing projects oriented toward a specific career track or concentration.
2. MAs in English must pass at least 15 hours of graduate coursework at the 600 level, courses which require at least one written project involving research, within a total of 36 hours of graduate coursework.
3. MAs in English must pass Part 1 of the MA Comprehensive Exam, consisting of an essay written for a graduate class and revised to a publishable level as judged by a grading committee and director from the graduate faculty. Students completing a thesis may use the successful defense of that thesis to satisfy this requirement.
4. MAs in English must pass Part 2 of the MA Comprehensive Exam, consisting of a timed (2 hour) essay on a question that requires student knowledge of a major work, and ten to twelve important critical studies directly related to that work, in one of three areas of English studies: literary studies, language and literacy, or professional writing.
5. MAs in English with a concentration in Creative Writing, Language and Literacy, or Professional Writing must successfully write and defend a Master's Thesis; other MA candidates have the option to write and defend a Master's Thesis as part of their program.

**Goal 3:**

MAs in English will have the conceptual and applied knowledge needed for success in the professional areas they pursue after completing their degree.

- A. Expected Outcome: MAs in English will know and demonstrate knowledge of the major theoretical positions, research materials, and methods in one professional area of English.

Assessment

1. MAs in English must pass a "gateway" course in one professional area of English; this course surveys major theoretical positions, research materials, and methods in that area; the coursework includes both short and longer papers that demonstrate appropriate knowledge of bibliographic methods and resources in that area.
2. MAs in English must pass Part 2 of the MA Comprehensive Exam, which

requires a 2-hour timed essay in response to a question drawn from a set primary text and list of secondary readings in one of three areas: literary studies, language and literacy, or professional writing.

- B. Expected Outcome: MAs in English will gain practical experience in their area preparatory to entering their professions.

Assessment

1. Selected students participate in Internship programs in professional writing (placement in internship position in business or industry), language and literacy (placement in internship position in teaching) or the teaching of college writing (mentor-apprentice program teaching assistantship and teaching fellowship).
2. Selected students participate in graduate assistantships that provide professional experience in tutoring, journal production and publishing, oversight of computer labs, administration, and scholarly research.

- C. Expected Outcome: Graduates will find appropriate employment in their areas of concentration.

Assessment

The Director of Graduate Studies tracks alumnae for 10 years after graduation, including employment information used to assess the number of graduates in jobs directly related to their training in the MA program.

**Goal 4**

The Graduate Program in English will provide content and methods courses for students seeking Alternative Certification in Education with English as their intended field of teaching specialization, while allowing some students to begin work on an MA in English.

- A. Expected Outcome: Graduate Students in English also seeking Alternate Certification in Education will be able to demonstrate their knowledge of literary texts, authors, genres, and critical traditions through discussion, research, and writing.

Assessment

These students must pass graduate courses in English as determined by individual programs in English designed by a committee consisting of three members of the Graduate Faculty in English led by the Coordinator of Graduate Studies in English.

B. Expected Outcome: Graduate Students in English also seeking Alternative Certification in Education will have appropriate training in the teaching of writing, general literature, and adolescent literature.

Assessment

These students must pass courses in the teaching of writing (ENGL 567), and the teaching of literature (ENGL 568); students may also take a course in adolescent literature (ENGL 526).

C. Expected Outcome: Graduate students in Education with a concentration in teaching English as a Second Language will have appropriate training in linguistics and grammar.

Assessment

These students must pass ENGL 524 or 642.

Note: Improving our English MAs' global awareness and multicultural knowledge, the English Department has recently hired a visiting professor who regularly teaches our courses on literatures of the African diaspora; the department also regularly offers numerous courses focusing on literature and culture from a global perspective. Special care is taken that at least one of these global courses is scheduled each semester. Meanwhile, 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.