2012-2013 Assessment
Master of Arts

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Program Outcomes for the MA in English are as follows:

1. Students should be able to situate literary texts in English within broad historical and cultural contexts, recognize appropriate literary conventions, and interpret particular texts by means of close reading.
2. Students should have a broad understanding of the philosophy of literary studies, be able to recognize different theoretical frameworks, and be able to apply one or more theoretical frameworks to particular texts.
3. Students should be able to write clearly and engagingly about literature, and be able to produce sustained, coherent arguments at an appropriate level of sophistication.
4. Students should complete their courses of study in a rigorous and timely manner.
5. Students who are going on to work or further study in the field of English should be adequately prepared for the next step in their professional lives.
6. Students should consider their graduate program at UAF to be of high quality.

Data

The committee reviewed 2 student portfolios and 2 exit questionnaires from students who graduated in 2011. While the committee is reviewing current graduates from the M.A. program, we will extrapolate from last year’s review. The committee is pleased to note that in 2011-12, the department initiated an annual "town meeting" for MA students and faculty to better communicate faculty expertise and interests and to learn what students would like added to the program.

Discoveries

1. We conclude that we are providing MAs with a very knowledgeable, accessible, and varied faculty. Current and future faculty vacancies need to be filled to continue this strength.
2. We were successful in providing more variety in the curriculum offered to MA students.
3. This year we initiated more opportunities for growth through the biweekly professional development workshops on teaching and composition. The concerns of previous graduates about the quality of teacher training have been alleviated.
4. We are graduating highly developed and publishable MAs with a consistent track record of publishing and continuing to teach in English and Literature.

Recommendations

1. Students continue to express a desire to have greater access to literary studies activities. Consequently, we need to provide greater access to professional development opportunities for MA
students. This should include increasing access to information, conferences, and opportunities to explore career opportunities.

2. MA students should continue to be encouraged to attend the bi-monthly Humanities Colloquium; we should also consider developing a visiting scholars series similar to the visiting writers series if appropriate funding can be found.

3. MA students need clearer guidelines in how to select a thesis chair and committee and how to most effectively receive support throughout the development of the thesis. The role of and expectations for committee members should also be clarified.

4. MA students need clearer guidelines on what is expected for a MA thesis and to be encouraged to include current research. Perhaps a thesis guide could be developed.

5. MA graduates don’t feel sufficiently prepared for the next step in their lives. The committee was uncertain as to how to address this concern and will seek input from the department as a whole.

6. The committee agrees with last year’s committee recommendations on suggested changes to the exit questionnaire in the following areas:

1. a question about a course MA student would like to see added to the curriculum,
2. a question about independent studies students took, and
3. a question about 400 level courses students took while enrolled in the Program.