2008-2009 Assessment Plan Report

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT REPORT
AY 2008-2009

Report Date: June 5, 2009

School/College: University of San Francisco/College of Arts and Sciences

Department/Program: Department of English

Person completing the Report: Eileen Fung

1. **Overview Statement: Briefly summarize the assessment activities that were undertaken this academic year, indicating:**

    a. **Which program learning outcomes were assessed this year.**

    Outcome I: Students will identity characteristics of different literary genres: novel, short fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and drama.

    Outcome II: Students will identify differences between various historical periods and representative writers in English and American Literatures.

    b. **Who in your department/program was involved in the assessment of the above learning outcomes**

    Professors Kate Elder (Outcome I) and Patrick Schwieterman (Outcome II) provided data from their courses, "Survey of American Literature" and "Introduction of British Medieval Literature."

2. **Please Answers the Following Questions for Each of the Student Outcomes Assessed:**

    Outcome I: Students will identity characteristics of different literary genres: novel, short fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and drama.

    a. **What did you do?**
    Describe clearly and concisely how you assessed the learning outcomes that were evaluated this year (e.g., measures, research methods, etc.).

    - This learning outcome was measured through pre- and post-course exams. The pre-course exam asked the students what they knew about genres before they took the Survey course. The post-course exam asked the students the same questions about genres after they completed the Survey course.

- In both pre- and post-course exams, students were given the following questions:

  #1: Provide a definition of a "genre" and identity three different types of genres.

  #2: Identify at least three characteristics, elements or patterns in a genre of poetry. Use the poem provided in your discussion to describe these characteristics. (The poem, "On a Tree Fallen Across the Road" by Robert Frost, is used in the "Survey of American Literature.")

b. **What did the faculty in the department or program learn?**
   Summarize your findings and conclusions as a result of the assessment indicating strengths and weaknesses in student learning demonstrated by this assessment.

In the "Survey of American Literature," 25 students took the pre-course exams and 23 took the post-course exams.

The following are the results for question #1:

	# students PRE-Course Exam	# students POST-Course Exam
Exemplary	3	20
Minimally Acceptable	18	3
Below Expectation	4	0

The following are the results for question #2:

	# students PRE-Course Exam	# students POST-Course Exam
Exemplary	1	19
Minimally Acceptable	13	4
Below Expectation	11	0

The data indicates that 12% (question #1) and 4% (question #2) of the class scored within the "exemplary" category in demonstrating comprehensive knowledge about literary genres in the pre-course exams. The data also shows that 72% (question #1) and 52% (question #2) of the class started the course with basic knowledge about genres, while 16% (question #1) and 44% (question #2) of

the class were unable to define characteristics of genres.

In the post-course exams, 87% (question #1) and 83% (question #2) of the class demonstrated exemplary knowledge about literary genres and their traditions. The data also shows that only 12% (question #1) and 16% (question #2) of the class fell in the "minimally acceptable" category. No students were unable to define basic characteristics of major genres in the post-course exam.

The data indicates that the course helped most students increase their understanding of literary genres (>80% of the class scored in the "Exemplary" category).

c. **What will be done differently as a result of what was learned?**

Discussion is planned for Fall 2009 and Spring 2010; the department may implement a new curriculum based on our most current Program Review (2008-2009).

Outcome II: *Students will identify differences between various historical periods and representative writers in English and American Literatures.*

a. **What did you do?**

- In the "Introduction to British Medieval Literature" course, students were given quizzes (six total) throughout the semester that asked them identify historical periods, e.g., representative authors, major works, and literary terms associated with them (after they studied them in class). The historical periods covered were Early Christianity, Anglo-Saxon, Anglo-Norman, and the Late Middle Ages.

- Students were required to complete a 12-15 page research paper that focused on at least one major author or text.

b. **What did the faculty in the department or program learn?**

- The six quizzes covered identification of authors and passages from major works and measured how successfully students acquired the knowledge of least three historical periods, e.g., representative authors, major works, and literary terms associated with them.

  The following data shows the scores of the six quizzes from the 24 students enrolled in the course. Each quiz was 10 points. A score of 9-10 points fell

into the category of "Exemplary"; 6-8 was "Minimally Acceptable"; and 5 and under was "Below Expectation."

Quizzes*	Exemplary	Minimally Acceptable	Below Expectation
#1	14	5	1
#2	10	10	4
#3	8	11	5
#4	9	15	1
#5	14	10	0
#6	12	9	2
Sum:	*67*	*60*	*12*

Total # quizzes taken 139

*Not all 26 students took quizzes each time.

The data shows that 48.2% of the class demonstrated good knowledge about at least three historical periods by identifying major authors, works, and literary terms associated with them; 43.2% of the class demonstrated basic knowledge about at least three historical periods; and 8.6% of the class barely exhibited knowledge of at least three historical periods.

- While the quizzes measured the students' broad knowledge in differentiating and identifying authors and texts, the papers assessed students' ability to conduct critical and research-based discussions about different historical periods in the context of their authors and/or their works. Students' papers discussed authors and works after they studied them in class. The category of "Exemplary" consisted of papers receiving an A, A- or A-/B+; the category of "Minimally Acceptable" included papers receiving a B+, B, B-, C+, C, and C-; the category of "Below Expectation" constituted papers receiving grades below C-.

Papers	Exemplary	Minimally Acceptable	Below Expectation
#1	3	23	0
#2	5	19	2
#3	7	17	1
Sum:	*15*	*59*	*3*

Total # papers 77

The data shows that, after the completion of the course, 19.5% of the class demonstrated good knowledge about major authors or major works; 76.6% of the class showed basic knowledge about representative authors or works; and 3.9% of the class was unable to deliver basic knowledge of representative authors or major works.

c. What will be done differently as a result of what was learned?

Discussion is planned for Fall 2009 and Spring 2010; the department may implement a new curriculum based on our most current Program Review (2008-2009).

Attach a copy of the components of the department/program assessment plan that have been modified since its initial submission:

- Department/program Assessment Plan has been attached (no changes have been made from the original document submitted in October 2008).