

Degree/Certificate: MFA

Major/Option: Creative Writing

Submitted by: Jonathan Johnson, Program Director

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Part I – Program SLO Assessment Report for 2013-14

Part I – for the 2013-14 academic year: Because Deans have been asked to create College-Level Summary Reports annually, the template has been slightly modified for a) clarity for Chairs and Directors, and b) a closer fit with what the Deans and Associate Deans are being asked to report.

Student Learning Outcome: The student performance or learning objective as published either in the catalog or elsewhere in your department literature.

“Understanding of the level of sophistication, care of composition, attention to revision and (when applicable) of the methods and functions of research that are necessary to literary writing.”

Overall evaluation of progress on outcome: Indicate whether or not the SLO has been met, and if met, to what level.

____ SLO is met after changes resulting from ongoing assessments, referencing assessment results from the previous year to highlight revisions;

____ SLO is met, but with changes forthcoming;

X SLO met without change required

1. **Strategies and methods:** Description of assessment method and choices, why they were used and how they were implemented.

Because the thesis is the final measure of our students’ work in Creative Writing, representing the culmination of their education in the MFA program and providing the clearest, measurable figuration of their growth as writers during their time here, we have chosen it here (as we have in recent years) as the “data source” for evaluation of SLOs. Additionally, thesis is the single central cohort element of the MFA curriculum which cuts across all genres of specialization (fiction, poetry and creative nonfiction) and providing an obvious and measurable set data for assessment.

Observations gathered from data: Include findings and analyses based on the strategies and methods identified in item #3.

Findings: Of the twenty-one (21) students eligible to complete their MFA Degree Program during the AY 2013-14, twenty (20) successfully presented and defended their theses. The one student who was not yet prepared to defend has made plans with his advisor to do so in December, 2014. The thesis continues to effectively serve its

purpose as a final curricular measure for our MFA students' overall performance, representing the culmination of their studies and creative work in the CRWR MFA Program. While the majority of our students are able to complete the degree in a timely fashion, within the programs' given two-year timeline, those whose work fails to meet expectations, or who need additional time for other reasons, are clearly identifiable; the program is flexible enough to accommodate their needs as well.

Analysis of findings: **All defending MFA students met the student learning objective mentioned above.**

2. What program changes will be made based on the assessment results?

- a) Describe plans to improve student learning based on assessment findings (e.g., course content, course sequencing, curriculum revision, learning environment or student advising).

No program changes appear to be in order.

- b) Provide a broad timeline of how and when identified changes will be addressed in the upcoming year.

N/A

3. Description of revisions to the assessment process the results suggest are needed and an evaluation of the assessment plan/process itself.

None needed at this time.

NEW: Part II – Closing the Loop

Follow-up from the 2012-13 Program Assessment Report

In response to the university's accrediting body, the [Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities](#), this section has been added. This should be viewed as a follow up to the previous year's findings. In other words, begin with findings from 2012-13, and then describe actions taken during 2013-14 to improve student learning along, provide a brief summary of findings, and describe possible next steps.

Working definition for closing the loop: Using assessment results to improve student learning as well as pedagogical practices. This is an essential step in the continuous cycle of assessing student learning. It is the collaborative process through which programs use evidence of student learning to gauge the efficacy of collective educational practices, and to identify and implement strategies for improving student learning." Adapted 8.21.13 from <http://www.hamline.edu/learning-outcomes/closing-loop.html>.

Student Learning Outcome(s) assessed for 2012-13

Strategies implemented during 2013-14 to improve student learning, based on findings of the 2012-13 assessment activities.

The SLO evaluated during the 2012-13 AY was:

"Understanding of the level of sophistication, care of composition, attention to revision and (when applicable) of the methods and functions of research that are necessary to literary writing."

Summary of results (may include comparative data or narrative; description of changes made to curriculum, pedagogy, mode of delivery, etc.): Describe the effect of the changes towards improving student learning and/or the learning environment.

The thesis continues to effectively serve its purpose as a final curricular measure for our MFA students' overall performance, representing the culmination of their studies and creative work in the CRWR MFA Program. While the majority of our students are able to complete the degree in a timely fashion, within the programs' given two-year timeline, those whose work fails to meet expectations, or who need additional time for other reasons, are clearly identifiable; the program is flexible enough to accommodate their needs as well.