

English: Academic Learning Compact Details
REVISED Fall 2012

English encourages in its students a sense of enthusiasm for the subject, an appreciation of its continuing social and cultural importance, and a particular sensitivity to the nuances of language and linguistic expression. Students graduating in this area of concentration should have acquired creative and critical thinking abilities, communication skills, and content knowledge that

- 1) enable them to interpret and express complex ideas;
- 2) serve as the basis for further study in Literature, English, or related fields (i.e. Law, Publishing, Library and media studies);
- 3) and prepare them for careers that demand strong communication skills together with creative and critical thinking and problem solving.

I. EXPECTED OUTCOMES (bold indicates particular stress)

1. Students demonstrate a strong ability to analyze and evaluate literary texts in formal and informal written work. Students will be able to defend their analysis and explain why they chose the approach used as particularly effective; [**Creative and Critical Thinking, Communication, Content**]

2. Students demonstrate a basic knowledge of literary periodization and movements; [**Content**] [NM rewrites]

3. Students demonstrate strong familiarity with the three major literary genres and forms: Most students in their thesis will show in depth knowledge of at least one genre, and should show some understanding of sub-genres such as satire, short story, novel, fantastic, gothic, comedy, tragedy, lyric, epic, etc.; [**Content**] [NM Rewrites]

4. Concentrators will demonstrate knowledge of the techniques of literary scholarship and allied fields, and show an ability to define a substantial literary or cultural project and carry it to successful completion.

Explanation: The senior capstone project, most often provides such evidence in one of the following common forms: a) literary analysis (must demonstrate competent analysis of object of study; at best will demonstrate engagement with secondary criticism and/or theoretical approaches appropriate to the project); b) portfolio project (emphasizes revision and showcases development by a selection of the student's best work); or c) plus creative thesis (allows inclusion of integrated original creative work, whether written, directed, performed, filmed, etc.). The senior project includes an oral component, the Baccalaureate Examination, during which three New College faculty (at least one from English) discuss the project with its author and assess the student's work and development. [**Content, Creative & Critical Thinking, Communication**]

5. English AOC students are expected to have studied and engaged in a serious way materials outside the canonical or dominant cultures of British and Euro-American literature; such study may include non-anglophone literature but also related areas of cultural and artistic production (history, anthropology, art history). [**Content, Creative & Critical Thinking**, Communication]

6. Students demonstrate a strong ability to engage productively in oral discussion of complex concepts, to contribute to group oral work, to construct arguments verbally, and to make effective formal presentations; [**Communication**, Creative and Critical Thinking, Content]

7. English Respecting and understanding intellectual property rights is a foundational skill for literary scholarship. Students should thus demonstrate their ability to provide an appropriate and clear record of resources used and consulted in accordance with standard referencing forms (MLA, Chicago, etc.), and an understanding of principles of intellectual property and credit. [**Communication**, Content]

II. Course Mapping

Course Matrix for English.

Course Type	Content Knowledge	Critical and Creative Thinking	Communication
Survey	Strong focus on content—chronology, genres, literary terms	research skills, study skills, recall and identification of salient information	Minimal discussion, small group work, study groups
Genre	characteristics of particular genre of literature, development and definition of genres such as drama, lyric, novel, satire, dream visions, humor, etc.	textual analysis; analytical essays	discussion, oral presentations, analytical essays
Historical	Literature in history, Literary artistic movements (Renaissance, Enlightenment, Romanticism, Modernism, Postmodernism, etc.)	textual analysis; analytical essays	discussion, oral presentations, analytical essays
Thematic	Literary influences, thematic topic knowledge (regional literatures, race/ethnic identity, gender, nationalisms, urban, etc.)	textual analysis; analytical essays	discussion, oral presentations, analytical essays

Major Author	Literary career of major author, range of works, historical context, canonization issues	textual analysis; analytical essays	discussion, oral presentations, analytical essays
Theory and Criticism	Significant critical approaches to literature, ability to recognize approaches and identify strengths and weaknesses of particular approaches, in depth exploration of major critical issues (narratology, authorial intention & biographical criticism, formalisms, poststructuralisms, New Historicism, cultural studies, feminism, psychoanalysis, etc.)	focus on critical methods	discussion, oral presentations, analytical essays

ADD:

Cross-cultural, multicultural, or marginalized traditions??

This reflects the types of courses offered that we consider fundamental to the discipline. Individual courses generally fit into one or more of these categories.

III. Track Your Progress

1. Student progress is measured at every step at New College.

°Each term or module course is evaluated on the “Term Evaluation” form and is available online. These evaluations give qualitative reviews of student work, identifying strengths and weaknesses in content knowledge, creative and critical thinking, and communication skills as pertinent.

°Each semester’s work is planned in advance with the student’s advisor using the New College Contract form, which specifies work to be completed for a satisfactory semester.

°Each semester’s work is evaluated by the student’s academic advisor in the Contract Certification, which certifies that the student has met the requirements for that semester’s contracted plan of study and work.

°All students must complete 3 Independent Study Projects (ISP), usually undertaken during January Interterm, and requiring the support of a faculty Project Sponsor and the Academic Advisor’s concurrence. Each of these is also evaluated on the ISP Evaluation

Form, indicating the project's purpose and goals, and identifying the content, communication, and/or creative/critical thinking or practical experience the student has achieved.

°Each student must develop and complete a Senior Project with the support and direction of a Thesis Project Sponsor and two Readers. The Thesis Project Sponsor writes an evaluation of the completed project that highlights the project's demonstration of appropriate content knowledge, critical and creative thinking, and/or written communication. The student's ability to demonstrate good oral communication skills and appropriate library research skills in developing the project are also frequently noted here.

°Each student must sit and pass an oral Baccalaureate Examination at the completion of the Senior Project, with an examining committee consisting of the Thesis Project Sponsor and two Readers. The successful and satisfactory completion of the Baccalaureate Examination, which is held publicly and advertised to the campus community, is required of all graduating students. An evaluation of the Baccalaureate Examination is also provided to the student and signed by all three members of the Baccalaureate Committee signifying their agreement that the Examination was a passing performance in terms of content knowledge, critical and creative thinking, and oral communication.

2. Students may track their progress also through the use of the AOC Worksheet and the explanation of "Requirements and Expectations", available as [PDF here](#) online. Students may download this form in their first year or before entering New College and track their progress in meeting the requirements as they progress in consultation with faculty in English. Students are expected to show more than one semester-length activity in each of the four areas: Textual analysis, historical engagement, cross-cultural encounter, and criticism/theoretical approaches. Students should have completed substantial work in both British and North American literary traditions. It is also normally expected that a student will have worked with a majority of the faculty in English.

Students should note that admission to the AOC is by application; mere quantitative coursework is not in itself adequate for admission to the AOC. The quality of a student's work needs to be strongly satisfactory for a student concentrating in English, not merely satisfactory for a student taking the course for breadth or personal interest. The study of Literature presumes a sensitivity to linguistic nuance and art, a working knowledge of literary forms, the ability to complete an extended project that is in most cases a written thesis of primarily solid literary analysis, although the method and critical approach may vary, and an interest in varieties of literary art and its function in producing and reproducing culture(s).

IV. Expectations: Internal Measures

Each senior's Thesis Project is carefully evaluated in accordance with the expected outcomes described in section I, and the Project must demonstrate appropriately

advanced writing and argumentation skills. In the student's Baccalaureate Examination, the Thesis Sponsor and Readers evaluate skill in oral communication and critical thinking, focusing on the Thesis Project and including some discussion of the student's entire college career.

In addition, members of our discipline participate in an ongoing discussion of guidelines and requirements for Thesis Projects, and also of our evaluation practices.

V. Expectations: External Validation of Measures

The expectations for New College graduates with a concentration in English are normative for the field at competitive institutions, and our evaluation of our students' work is supported by a variety of external validations. Examples of external measures that demonstrate our graduates' competence in the field include:

1. Senior Theses and Senior Projects, which may be subject to external review periodically;
2. Baccalaureate Examinations, which are public events at which the candidate defends her or his work on the Senior Project and uses the knowledge and skills gained throughout her/his college career;
3. Scores on examinations such as the GRE, LSAT, GMAT, and other post-graduate examinations;
4. Admission to competitive graduate programs including PhD programs in English, Literature, American Studies, Cultural Studies, Rhetoric & Composition, Education, and other academic fields; MBA programs; Law schools; Education degree programs; Psychology or psychiatry programs; Nursing, medical, or counseling programs; Environmental Education and Policy programs; Library Sciences and Media Studies programs, MFA programs in Creative Writing and Creative Arts, to name a few;
5. Competitive awards and fellowships such as Fulbright, Ford Foundation, Marshall Scholars, etc.
6. Being hired into paid work or competitive internships in fields from publishing to consulting, teaching to business management, paralegal work to web-design and advertising.
7. Publishing original creative, scholarly, analytical, or public service work or research.