

CLAS Deans' comments on BA English (non-accredited) report

Reviewer: Christopher J. Mitchell, Ph.D., Associate Dean

Last report submitted by department: Fall 2020 (Initial Assessment Plan)

Documents submitted for this review:

- SLO Table for Program
- “Improvements made” document including SLO results data analysis
- Appendix with graphically rendered SLO results data

Comments:

In the initial assessment plan of 2020, we noted that the SLOs were generally clear and measurable; in this report some of the SLO words have been modified a bit (e.g. “thoughtfully and carefully” changed to “attentively and critically” in SLO #1) but these revisions do not at all compromise their measurability. Quite the opposite—the “How used” component of the table combined with the data analyses convincingly demonstrates their measurability. (To that end, it is clear that putting the results data in the SLO table wouldn’t make sense in your case because you graphically represent the data.) The data analysis is concise, sophisticated, and honest, and it is great to see it being used to inform the evolution process of your assessment methods and curriculum, which of course is the “textbook” end-goal for assessment processes. We encourage you to keep this process going and we look forward to the 4-year report.

Academic Affairs –Review & Feedback

B.A. English

The B.A. in English conducted several regular reviews of the program over the course of two years. The program has benefited from the Undergraduate Studies Committee’s rigorous and thoughtful approach to improving and measuring the growth of English majors. The steps toward improvement include the following: revising general education courses, transforming a junior-level seminar to a senior-level capstone course, assessing student essays, conducting a student focus group, revising the exit survey, evaluating the core through the three English emphases (professional writing, creative writing, and literary studies), and monitoring the effectiveness of job preparation via the course English 4060: English Studies Career Development. The thoroughness of the committee’s approach is to be commended, especially in recognizing the need for assessing the actual impact of curricular developments on the growth of students in their abilities through the program, from 2000-level to capstone to job preparedness. The report also notes that data capture remains an issue. The number of exit surveys collected was low, making the comparison of data difficult when the exit survey is one of the primary sources of information from students on their learning outcomes.



VPAA Office Dr. Suzie Park

2/28/23

Date

English Major - Year 2

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for Academic Programs

Please list all of the student learning outcomes for your program as articulated in the assessment plan.

English majors will be able to:

1. English majors will think and read attentively and critically.
2. English majors will write clearly, analytically, and expressively.
3. English majors will interpret texts using appropriate critical vocabularies.
4. English majors will understand and be able to situate texts in diverse cultural and historical contexts.
5. English majors will become skilled in using multiple technologies and research methods.
6. English majors will be able to speak clearly, analytically, and expressively, and will use active and critical listening skills to understand and evaluate ideas.

Overview of Measures/Instruments

SLO(s) <i>Note: Measures might be used for more than 1 SLO</i>	ULG*	Measures/Instruments <i>Please include a clear description of the instrument including when and where it is administered</i>	How is the information Used? <i>(include target score(s), results, and report if target(s) were met/not met/partially met for each instrument)</i>
1 - 6	C, W	Annual exit survey of graduating majors.	To evaluate satisfaction of graduating students with their overall departmental experience and their perceptions about their attainment of departmental SLOs 1-6. Target is a majority of responses in the top three ranges, i.e., well above the 3.0 mean.
6	C, S	Randomized annual observation of student presentation at annual English Student Conference.	To evaluate whether students are speaking clearly, analytically and expressively, and using active and critical listening skills.
1, 2, 3, 4, 5	C, W	Annual evaluation with departmental grading rubric of a randomized portfolio selection of essays from ENG 2205 and various 3000- and 4000-level courses.	To evaluate student writing about literary texts at several levels, and to track proficiency across concentrations. Sophomore rubric scores will serve as a baseline, and rising scores across time on all areas of the rubric.

**Please reference any University Learning Goal(s) (ULG) that this SLO, if any, may address or assess. C=Critical Thinking, W=Writing & Critical Reading; S=Speaking and Listening; Q=Quantitative reasoning; R=Responsible Citizenship; NA=Not Applicable*

Improvements and Changes Based on Assessment

1. Provide a short summary (1-2 paragraphs or bullets) of any curricular actions (revisions, additions, and so on) that were approved over the past two years as a result of reflecting on the student learning outcomes data. Are there any additional future changes, revisions, or interventions proposed or still pending?

- **Revision of ENG 3300, Seminar in English Studies to ENG 4300 and 4390, English Studies Capstone and Honors Capstone, in the English major core.**

In spring 2022, the department passed an important revision of ENG 3300 to ENG 4300, effectively changing it from a seminar to a capstone course. As a requirement for all English majors and concentrations, this course was revised to function in a more integrative mode by having advanced students in all English majors and concentrations work together in a course that serves as a cumulative capstone of their own coursework. The data from several years of assessing papers from ENG 3300 suggested that students were not sufficiently demonstrating advanced skill levels in research and writing that we had expected in this course (SLOs 3, 4, and 5). As a 3000-level course, this course could be taken by sophomores, juniors, and seniors; moving the course to the 4000-level ensures that only advanced students are being assessed. In addition, by adding an honors version of this course, we have created another opportunity for our honors students to take upper division honors coursework.

- **Curricular review in progress, Fall 2022.**

In fall 2022, UGS decided that a curricular review was in order. Based on this round of assessment and the fact that we have not undertaken a major curricular review since our curriculum was revised and implemented in 2015, UGS is currently taking the following actions:

- UGS has asked committees for each concentration (Literary & Cultural Studies, Creative Writing, and Professional Writing) to conduct a review of the core curriculum and their respective emphases. The results of this review will be reported to the Undergraduate Studies Committee by Oct. 15, 2022. After these reports and their implications are discussed internally by UGS, the results will be reported to the department with recommendations. Our goal is to gain a greater understanding of if and how the core curriculum works to prepare students to demonstrate SLOs 1-6 at an advanced level by the time they graduate. Additionally, our goal is to ensure that the courses in each concentration are setting and meeting expectations for our SLOs in ways appropriate to their subject area within English studies.
- A focus groups was conducted in late September 2022 to assess more carefully student experiences in the major, with particular attention to students' experience of the core, their emphasis, and high-impact experiences in the major. Questions were created to gauge what students see as high impact learning experiences as they related to our SLOs. This group included undergraduate English and English Language Arts majors who were interviewed by graduate

students trained to facilitate the group with a list of questions provided by UGS. After student comments and their implications are discussed internally by UGS, the results will be reported to the department with recommendations.

- UGS will also read and discuss major narratives from two sections of ENG 4060, English Studies Career Development and collect our first data set from ENG 4300 by collecting a written assignment and assessing an oral presentation.
- Department meeting scheduled in November 2022 to review results of assessment data from this assessment cycle, feedback from student and faculty focus groups, and our department SLOs.

- **Improved data collection for exit surveys, Fall 2022.**

- Although UGS recognizes that data collection during the past two academic years has been particularly challenging, we also acknowledge that we need to improve our process for capturing data on exit surveys. While we previously had moved to an online data collection model, beginning fall 2022, we plan to return to using paper surveys to collect data from graduating seniors by asking professors to allow time in class for these students to complete the survey.

2. Please provide a brief description or bulleted list of any improvements (or declines) observed/measured in student learning. Be sure to mention any intervention made that has not yet resulted in student improvement (if applicable).

- **Data Analysis**

There are three data sets that provide information about student learning: assessment of papers collected at the 2000-, 3000-, and 4000-level during AY 2020/21 and AY 2021/2022; assessment of student presentations at the English Studies Conference during spring 2021 and spring 2022; and data gathered from exit surveys. The breakdown of this data can be found in Appendix 1. Some key points:

- Fairly consistently across data charts 1-5 (Appendix, Part I), the assessment of undergraduate papers at various levels demonstrates student growth in SLOs 1-5 from the lower division baseline (ENG 2205) the courses assessed at the upper division level. This is particularly true when looking at the data at the superior level. Very few students (often none) are superior in their 2000-level course work, but this number tends to increase slightly at the 3000-level and then significantly at the 4000-level.
- In the evaluation of particular attention to speaking and listening for SLO 6, overall students achieved very strong scores: students overwhelmingly were ranked at the very good or superior level on the 5-point assessment scale (Appendix, Part II). Thoughtful and ethical use of source material, audience awareness, effective use of language, and active and critical listening are noticeable strengths.
- Our exit surveys from 2020-2022 suggest students believe that they are leaving our major with a high level of achievement in SLOs 1-6. However, during the past three years we only received 17 submitted exit surveys. These were often well divided among concentrations/majors and native/transfer students, but during one year skewed more

heavily toward honors students. Although the response rate was low, the feedback from those who participated was high. In all three years scores in all categories were 4.4 or 4.5 or higher and student feedback was positive. Students praised instructors (often for accessibility and attentiveness), relationships between instructors and students and peers, the well-roundness of the curriculum and course offerings, the skill growth they experienced, and their broadened mindsets (particularly in regard to more diverse viewpoints and materials). One student suggested that all of our introductory classes for the various concentrations be required (e.g., Intro to PW, Intro to CW, Intro to Lit Studies). Exit surveys clearly demonstrate that we have reached and exceeded our target goal of having the majority of responses well above the 3.0 mean.

3. Using the form below, please document annual faculty and committee engagement with the assessment process (such as the review of outcomes data, revisions/updates to assessment plan, and reaffirmation of SLOs).

History of Annual Review		
Date of Annual Review	Individuals/Groups who Reviewed Plan	Results of the Review (i.e., reference proposed changes from #1 above, revised SLOs, etc...)
Spring 2020-Spring 2022	Undergraduate Studies Committee; English Department faculty	Discussed, developed, and passed the revision of general education course offerings, including ENG 2504G (revised course), ENG 2705G (revised course), and ENG 2706G (new course). Particular attention was paid to the way these courses would also benefit students in the major.
Fall 2021-Spring 2022	Undergraduate Studies Committee; English Department faculty	Discussed, developed, and passed the revision of ENG 3300 to ENG 4300/4390 to allow for better assessment of SLOs at the advanced level.
Spring 2022	Undergraduate Studies Committee, English Department faculty	Discussed revision of the major to reduce the number of electives to allow for greater student investment in a wider variety of courses in order to give them the opportunity to expand their skill sets. Reduction of electives was passed at a department meeting in April 2022.
April 2022	Undergraduate Studies Committee	Collected and assessed student essays.
September 2022	Undergraduate Studies Committee	Trained graduate students facilitated focus group with a group of 13 undergraduate students using a set of questions developed by UGS. UGS then reviewed this data, which was collected in a way to protect student anonymity.
September 2022	Undergraduate Studies Committee	Collated and reviewed data collected from AY 2020-2022.
September-October 2022	Professional Writing Committee, Creative Writing Committee, Ad Hoc Literary Studies Committee	At the request of UGS, committees representing each emphasis in the major were asked to evaluate the core as it relates to their emphasis and the courses in their emphasis. Reports will be submitted to UGS by Oct. 15, 2022. UGS will review and make any recommendations necessary to the department to begin a curricular revision process.

October 2022	Undergraduate Studies Committee	Committee revised exit survey and devised a better method by which to capture data from all senior English majors graduating in December 2022.
November 2022	English Department Faculty	At a department meeting in November, UGS will report to the English Department faculty about the findings in this year's assessment report and solicit faculty feedback. As part of this discussion, faculty teaching ENG 4060, English Studies Career Development, will provide insight to the department about how prepared students are for the job market and how well they are able to identify their skill sets and transfer those skills to future professional settings after graduation. UGS will also review our current SLOs and suggest the need for an additional SLO.
Late Fall 2022- Spring 2023	Undergraduate Studies Committee	Committee will reflect on what we learned from this assessment cycle and revise our assessment process accordingly for the next assessment cycle.

Dean Review & Feedback

Dean or designee

Date

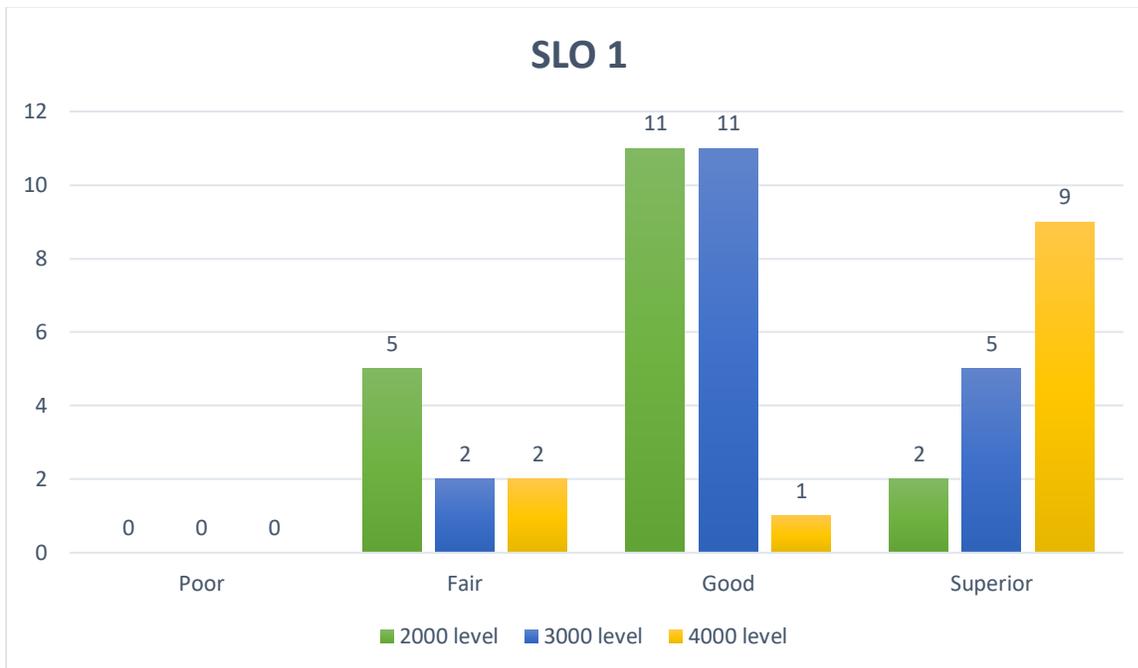
Academic Affairs –Review & Feedback

Date

Appendix 1

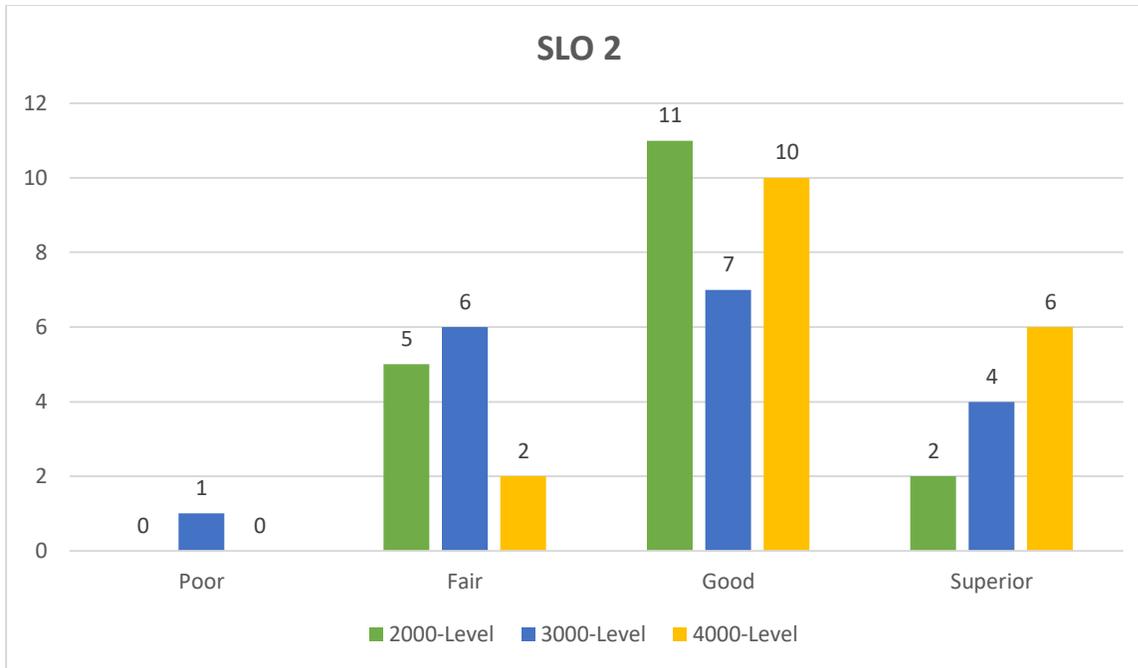
Part I: Evaluation of Critical Thinking and Writing

Annual evaluation with departmental grading rubric of a random portfolio selection of essays from ENG 2205, and various 3000- and 4000-level courses. This information provides data about student writing at several levels, and to track proficiency across student careers. Sophomore rubric scores serve as a baseline against which to measure upper division coursework.



Student Learning Outcome 1: Students will think and read attentively and critically; corresponds to rubric item 1: the student writing demonstrates that the writer has read thoughtfully and carefully. N = 18 in each category. Six of the 4000-level papers were rated NA for item 1, and so are not represented above.

University Learning Goals: Critical Thinking, Writing.



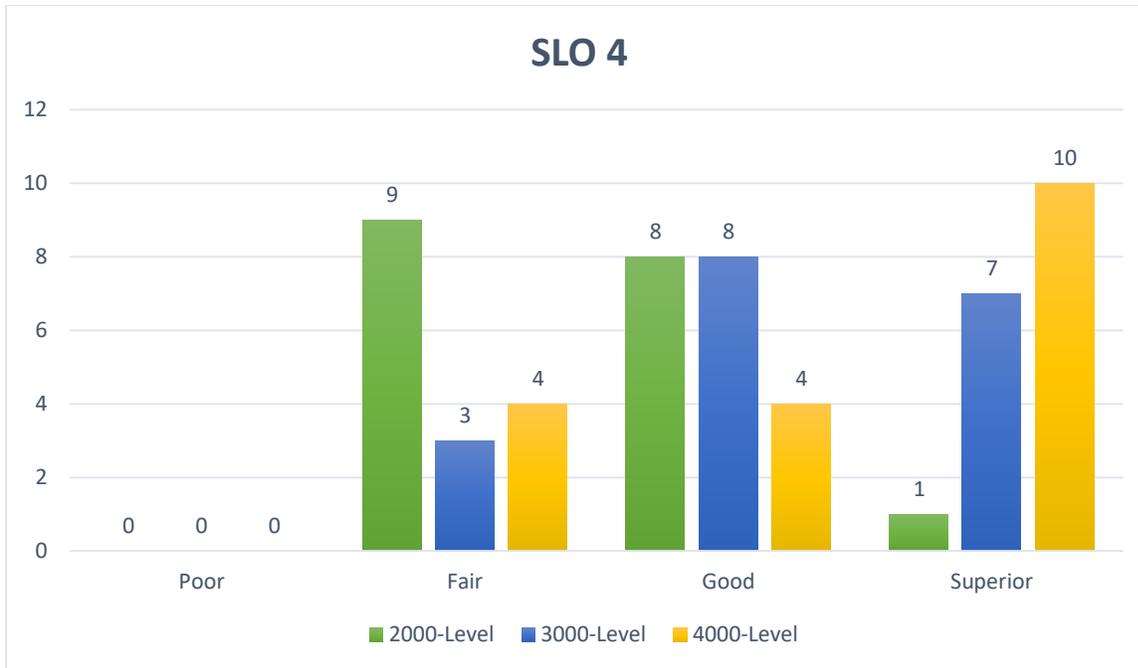
Student Learning Outcome 2: Students write clearly, analytically, and expressively; corresponds to rubric item 2: the student writing is written clearly, analytically, and expressively. N = 18 in each category.

University Learning Goals: Critical Thinking, Writing.



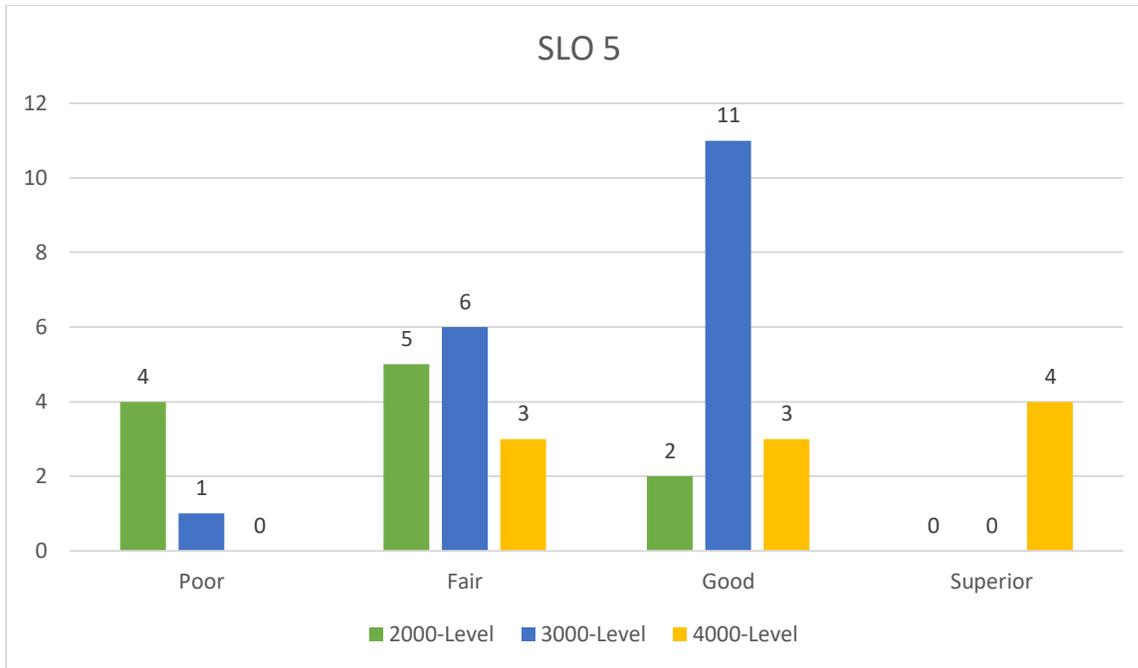
Student Learning Outcome 3: English majors will interpret texts using appropriate critical vocabularies; corresponds to rubric item 3: the student writing demonstrates that the writer can interpret texts using appropriate critical vocabularies. N = 18 in each category. One of the 2000-level papers was rated NA; one of the 4000-level papers were rated NA for this SLO. These are not represented in the graph above.

University Learning Goals: Critical Thinking, Writing.



Student Learning Outcome 4: English majors will understand and be able to situate texts in diverse cultural and historical contexts; corresponds to rubric Item 4: the student writing demonstrates that the writer understands and is able to situate a text in diverse literary, cultural and/or historical contexts. N = 18 in each category.

University Learning Goals: Critical Thinking, Writing.

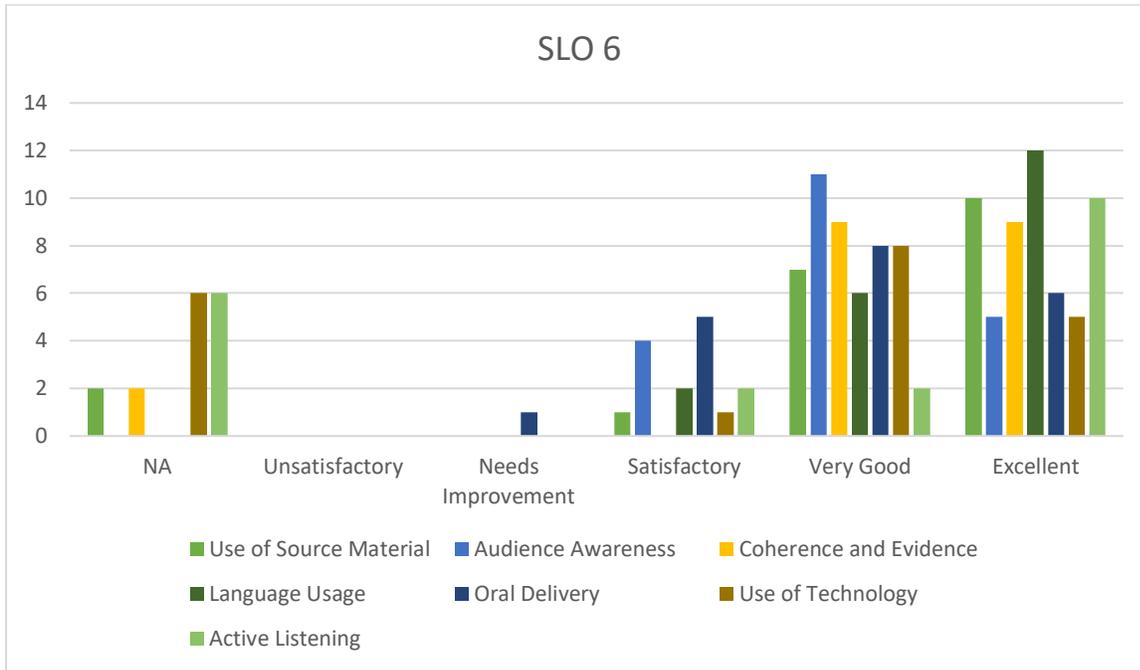


Student Learning Outcome 5: English majors will become skilled in using multiple technologies and research methods; corresponds to rubric Item 5: The student writing demonstrates use of multiple technologies and research methods. N = 18 in each category. Seven of the 2000-level papers and eight of the 4000-level papers were rated NA and are not represented in the graph above.

University Learning Goals: Critical Thinking, Writing.

Part II: Evaluation of Speaking and Listening

The table below shows the results from randomized annual evaluations of student presentations at the annual English Student Conference (Spring 2021, Spring 2022). This data reflects our students’ ability is to speaking clearly, analytically and expressively, and using active and critical listening skills.



Student Learning Outcome 6: Students will speak clearly, analytically and expressively, and use active and critical listening skills to understand and evaluate ideas.

University Learning Goals: Critical Thinking, Speaking.