

2007- 2008 Annual Program Review Report
English 7-12

Name of Program: English 7-12

The English Teaching Major (7-12) currently includes 58 advisees assigned to the primary advisor and 13 advisees assigned to other advisors in the English Department within the Department of Languages and Literature.

List of Annual Program Reviewers:

David Guest, Chair, Department of Languages and Literature

Linda Kay Davis, Associate Professor, English Education

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Leigh Bonds, Graduate of APSU English Teaching Program, 2003

Karen Mondary, Graduate of APSU English Teaching Program, 2006

I. Assessment of Candidate

What do the summarized reports (portfolio review, milestone review, student teacher information, PRAXIS scores, program completion rates, exit surveys, employer survey, and graduate follow-up survey) and data sets show about the performance of your candidates?

Portfolio Review

In the spring of 2008, all but one English Teaching Major (7-12) passed the Milestone IV Review on the first evaluation. However, this student corrected errors in links to artifacts and received a passing grade upon resubmission. English Teaching Majors showed strengths in discipline taught, communication, assessment, and evaluation in their portfolios. This good passing rate indicates effective preparation for student teaching and appropriate mentoring during student teaching. In the areas of discipline taught, communication, and assessment and evaluation, 50 percent of English majors exceeded expectations on the Milestone IV Portfolio Performance in the spring of 2008. On Standard 11B, Technology for Ethical Use, 66 percent met the expectations, and 33 percent exceeded the expectations.

Milestone Review

All English Teaching Majors, 7-12, passed the Milestone II Review in the fall of 2007 and spring of 2008 compared to 58 percent of the total of 125 reviewed in spring of 2008 and 81 percent of the total of 106 reviewed in the fall of 2007. The success rate of English Teaching Majors indicates these students addressed given standards and supplied appropriate supporting artifacts.

Clinical Teaching Evaluation Summary

Students completing clinical teaching placements were evaluated by their mentoring teachers and university supervisors using a scale of 0-3 with 0 = Not observed, 1 = Unacceptable, 2 = Satisfactory, 3 = Outstanding. From 2005-2008, APSU students who completed their clinical teaching experiences displayed high satisfactory levels of communication, professionalism, and punctuality. The highest scores consistently displayed were those for interacting “appropriately with colleagues and administrators” and for demonstrating “professional behavior.” Also, these students showed high satisfactory levels in their teaching by providing “examples and explanations” and opportunities “for student practice.”

Although these student teachers’ high satisfactory scores indicated they had created “an atmosphere of mutual respect, established “good rapport with students,” and demonstrated patience,” they scored a bit lower in preventing “discipline problems from happening.” However, scores of 2.48, 2.44, and 2.47 respectively over the last three years are still in the satisfactory range. In 2006-2007 and 2007-2008, two other areas in the low satisfactory score range included using “a variety of questioning techniques” with scores of 2.36 and 2.39 respectively and providing “a variety of assessment formats” with scores of 2.36 and 2.39 respectively.

These data provide information showing that APSU mentors have reported APSU student teachers to understand the importance of behaving as professionals, to care about students, and to know how to use active engagement in instruction. These mentors have also identified classroom questioning and assessment formats as areas of less strength than others.

Evaluations of APSU Teachers by Area Principals 2007-2008

Area principals often commented that teachers trained by APSU within the past five years were capable of using technology, were professional, worked well with their colleagues, and were knowledgeable of their content areas. Several positive comments related to new teachers’ knowledge of standards-based instruction and instructional strategies.

Area principals made at least eighteen comments regarding need for APSU graduates to have more strategies and techniques for positive and successful classroom management. Another area of concern that surfaced in principals' comments included five comments about learning to assess students in a variety of ways and using assessments and data to plan instruction. Of the APSU teachers trained in the past five years but not retained in their jobs, area principals cited problems in classroom management or discipline as cause for not retaining.

Principals' responses to one Likert item (4 = Strongly Agree, 3= Agree, 2 = Disagree, 1= Strongly Disagree) indicated concern that APSU teacher education graduates from the last five years were not strong in their ability to address "the needs of students with diverse cultural and language backgrounds and different learning styles" (average score of 2.8 high school principals). On the other hand, average scores obtained from three Likert items (4 = Strongly Agree, 3= Agree, 2 = Disagree, 1= Strongly Disagree) indicated principals' positive responses to the following statements:

Teachers who completed their education program from APSU within the last five years reflect the dispositions expected of professional educators (3.5 middle school principals; 3.4 high school principals).

Teachers who completed their education program from APSU within the last five years have in-depth knowledge of the subject matter (average score of 3.3, middle school principals; 3.5 high school principals).

Teachers who completed their education program from APSU within the last five years reflect a thorough understanding of professional and pedagogical knowledge and skills (3.3, middle school principals; 3.5 high school principals).

Thus, principals, as well as mentors, recognized that APSU teacher education graduates possessed professional behaviors, understood teaching strategies, and have satisfactory content knowledge but lack satisfactory skills in assessment.

Follow-up Surveys of Graduates in First Five Years of Teaching

APSU graduates of all licensure programs, who are in their first five years of teaching, wrote comments concerning several strengths of courses required for licensure. These strengths included field experiences, technology, instruction in how to write lesson plans, and diversity. On a modified Likert scale of 3 = Very Satisfied, 2 = Satisfied, 1= Not Satisfied, the highest

average scores were obtained from positive responses APSU graduates made to the following statements:

1. Establish instructional goals that address student needs at appropriate instructional level. Average score of 2.608
2. Design communication appropriate to the audience, while using correct grammar and organizing information logically. Average Score of 2.549
3. Use technology to enhance both teaching and professional performance. Average score of 2.549

However, these same former students' responses indicated less satisfaction in their preparation in two areas:

1. Interpret aggregated and disaggregated assessment data appropriately and use this information to evaluate student learning and for making data driven instructional decisions. Average score of 1.96
2. Maintain accurate and up-to-date records. Average score of 2.26

In their surveys, English Teaching (7-12) Major graduates in their first five years of teaching expressed greater satisfaction with their preparation than did majors in any other area in their responses to statements addressing "individual needs of students with diverse cultural and language backgrounds," communicating "student achievement and progress to students, their parents, and appropriate others," and using "technology to enhance both teaching and professional performance." However, these same graduates desired to have learned more about classroom management, use of data to plan and differentiate instruction, assessment, and record keeping.

Praxis Scores

ETS Praxis scores from 2003-2008 show that 41 examinees took and passed the English Content Knowledge subtest with scores greater than 157, the minimum required for licensure in Tennessee. Of this number, 4 students took the test two times before passing it. Two of these four students had initially taken the Content test in November of 2002. The required passing score for licensure in Tennessee is 157 on the Content; the 41 students' average score on the Content test was 175.5, 18 points above the minimum. The four students who retook the Content test a second time improved their scores significantly with scores of 173, 165, 158, and 172, yielding an average score of 167 on retakes. The goal is have 89 percent of students pass the

Praxis tests. English Teaching Majors have exceeded this goal on both the Content and Pedagogy subtests.

A total of 41 took the Praxis English Pedagogy test from 2003-2008. Some of these may have been teachers on alternative licensure. Although Tennessee requires a score on 145 on the English Pedagogy test, APSU students taking this test earned an average score of 154.5. Six of these students took the Pedagogy test twice before earning a passing score. At least two of the students who did not pass the Pedagogy test on the first attempt were transfer students and did not complete all of their coursework at APSU. One student, who first attempted the Pedagogy test in November of 2002, attempted the Pedagogy three times before earning a passing score in January of 2004. Another student failed to earn a passing score on the Pedagogy test in November of 2006; and as far as we can discern, this person never attempted the test again.

Completers

Although the number of English Teaching Majors has increased steadily, the number of students who completed student teaching in 2007-2008 was 5 out of 6. One student did not pass the 043 Praxis test and did not take the PLT. Additionally, 6 students took and passed the Language, Literature, and Composition: Essays test that Kentucky requires for licensure.

One reason for the low number of completers is that several of these majors chose to begin teaching on alternative licenses rather than to complete the clinical teaching experience.

What do the summarized reports (PRAXIS results, exit surveys, employer surveys, and graduate follow-up surveys) show about changes that may need to be made to your program or to specific courses?

Although the English Teaching Major program is successful, the data sets, anecdotal remarks, and comments on surveys do indicate need for some minor adjustments to the program. One change that was mentioned in the APR meeting was to explore the need for a course such as "Teaching Writing in the Secondary School." The comment one APR committee member made was that students seeking licensure to teach English in grades 7-12 need more instruction in how to teach writing. This is not to say that this topic is not covered in English 4400, Teaching English in the Secondary School, because it is covered but could be taught more extensively in a separate course.

The concerns about using data to make curricular decisions are now being addressed in EDUC 4270 as the professor works with the local school system to provide examples of actual data to show licensure students how teachers and school systems use this data to make curricular decisions. This area will be addressed in the English methods course with a PowerPoint presentation about assessment data and classroom discussion about how to use assessment to make instructional decisions. Although classroom management emerged as a concern of principals, English teaching graduates and student teachers did not list this area as a major concern. However, in the methods class, additional emphasis could be placed on classroom management in discussion of ways to manage groups when differentiating instruction. To address principals' concerns that APSU graduates have a more effective understanding of classroom management, one class session will focus on classroom management. To address concerns about accommodations for students with diverse cultural and language backgrounds, On October 9, 2008, Jason Groppe, ESL teacher at two schools in the Clarksville-Montgomery County School System, will speak to the ENGL 4400 class about appropriate accommodations for ESL students in language arts or English classes.

Assessment of Program Operations

What do enrollment, exit survey, and graduate follow-up survey data sets show about the operations and quality of your program?

The English Teaching Major program has grown over the past three years from about 28-30 majors to around 70 current majors. English Teaching Major (7-12) graduates feel well prepared in content and equipped to “design instruction that addresses the individual needs of students with diverse cultural and language backgrounds,” to “communicate student achievement” to appropriate stakeholders, and to “use technology to enhance both teaching and professional performance.” These perceived strengths reflect positively on the program that includes strong content, a course in technical writing, opportunities to enroll in courses that cover diverse literature, composition and linguistics courses that foster effective communication. An essential element of this program is a well-defined methods course that includes instruction in areas of strength and remains flexible to address areas that need to be strengthened. Of course, the English Teaching Program is closely aligned with APSU standards for teacher education and is complementary to courses students take in the School of Education. For example, students in

ENGL 4400 use the same template to design lesson and unit plans as they use in their education courses.

Concerns regarding graduates' abilities to "interpret aggregated and disaggregated assessment appropriately and use this information to evaluate student academic achievement . . . and for making data driven instructional decisions" appear across majors and in responses that groups provided in comments and on Likert scale items. Thus, assessment issues must be addressed in education and academic methods courses. Although formative and summative assessments and other types of assessments are addressed in ENGL 4400, the use of data derived from Benchmark and standardized tests to plan instruction has not been a topic addressed extensively.

What specific short-term actions will be taken during the 2008-09 academic year to improve program operations and quality? What are the long-term action implications? Please specify tasks and timelines for planned actions.

Examining data sets from the various sources the School of Education provided at the Data Retreat before the beginning of fall semester of 2008 influenced some changes in the syllabus for ENGL 4400, Teaching English in the Secondary School. Requirements for activities to be completed during field experiences. For example, during the fall semester of 2008, students in ENGL 4400, Teaching English in the Secondary Schools, will participate in 30 hours of field experience in area classrooms. As part of their field experiences, the students will assist the mentoring teacher in planning for one week of instruction, will teach at least one lesson to the mentor's students, will spend at least 5 of the 30 hours in a tutoring setting, and will participate in a data chat in which teachers talk about results of a Benchmark test and decide how to address deficiencies. On September 25 and 30, 2008, each student will also teach an abbreviated lesson to students in Mrs. Leigh Bonds' English IV high school class, a part of the CMCSS Middle College located on the APSU campus. Teaching this lesson will give students in ENGL 4400 experience in teaching and managing a classroom before teaching a lesson in their mentors' classes.

Participating in data chats will allow pre-service teachers to learn how to use assessment and resulting data to inform instruction. If for some reason, a student is not able participate in a data chat, the student is to discuss with the mentoring teacher how that teacher uses Benchmark data to make instructional decisions.

To address the issue of knowing how to provide accommodation for students with diverse cultural backgrounds and learning styles, during the fall semester of 2008, students in ENGL 4400 will be required to provide accommodations for at least one different type of diverse learner in each of the 6-8 lesson plans included in the unit plan. Because principals commented that APSU graduates needed help with record keeping, the professor who teaches ENGL 4400 asked CMCSS permission to allow students in the class to attend the local system's after school or Saturday training sessions to train teachers to use Power School, an online record keeping system recently adopted. Permission for pre-service teachers to attend this training was denied because live data are used in the training; thus, privacy laws prohibit college students from participating in the training with in service teachers. However, Dr. Sallie Armstrong, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Regular Education Department of CMCSS, has offered to have one of the literacy coaches teach a session for my students at the Central Office. This training would help students who are planning to student teach in CMCSS to be acquainted with this system before beginning their clinical teaching experiences.

To learn more about our graduates and their perceptions of their experiences, Dr. David Guest, chair of the Department of Languages and Literature, appointed an Alumni Relations Committee. This committee will collect data from our graduating seniors to gauge their perceptions of their academic programs. Other surveys may involve alumni at set intervals. From the data collected, we will determine some of the degree of success of our programs and possibly make program changes as indicated.

II. Assessment System: What data do you need to better evaluate your candidates and/or program? Based on the data provided, how can the Teacher Education Unit Assessment System be changed to provide more meaningful and useful evidence regarding candidate performance and program operations?

As discussed in the Teacher Education Council meeting on September 10, 2008, those of us who teach the secondary methods courses desire additional information about how well our students perform in different areas of the subtests of Praxis exams. The School of Education has agreed to make copies of additional information available for us to access. Perhaps, this information could be scanned into some sort of data base. We also need to be able to access data about our students' performances on areas of the lesson and unit plans that we are now encouraged to grade on LiveText. This data will enable individual professors to plan instruction

to address concerns before students begin student teaching. Examining data from all students' lesson and unit plans also will enable the unit to assess how well we are performing as a whole in teaching our students how to plan and assess instruction.

Having student teachers, graduates in their first five years, and area principals respond to discipline-specific statements would provide feedback concerning specific majors in addition to feedback about the unit in general. Such data could be helpful in evaluating the effectiveness of particular programs.