

ANNUAL REPORT

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

ENGLISH (AY 2018-2019)

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The English program encompasses two main components: Composition, consisting of lower-division courses 090, 093, 110, 111, 211, and 212, and the upper division course 311; and the Bachelor of Arts in English, consisting of a core of required courses on the 200 level, and advanced courses on the 300 and 400 levels in Literature, Literature and the Environment, and Creative Writing. Assessments of student learning outcomes in each of these components serve different goals and embrace separate criteria. The GER-oriented service component of Composition is not an element of the BA in English, though it is delivered by English faculty and adjuncts.

Below are the results of our assessment activities for AY 2018-19.

PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (SLOs)

In the fall of 2017 the English faculty met to revise our program outcomes to be more inclusive of our creative writing students and we revised to allow for more useful assessment work. After a full assessment cycle we feel comfortable with these revised outcomes and how we assess them.

English B.A. Program Student Learning Outcomes:

- **Apply various theoretical approaches and methodologies to the analysis of literature or the craft of writing**
- **Critically analyze or explicate literature and writing from diverse, marginalized perspectives**
- **Demonstrate advanced reading and writing skills specific to their literary or creative disciplines**
- **Reflect on their own writing, demonstrating an awareness of technique, audience, and purpose.**
- **Demonstrate professional skills through a capstone experience, internship, or senior thesis.**

HOW DATA IS COLLECTED ON PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (SLOs)

The English faculty assesses our work in three primary categories:

- **Program Assessment:** B.A. in English degree with three emphasis areas (literature, creative writing, and literature and the environment)
- **Course Assessment:** composition, literature, creative writing courses
- **Additional Assessment:** 110 portfolios, Writing Center, pilot programs

Over the course of the year, in our monthly meetings, and especially during our convocation meeting time, we work through assessment for each of these categories.

- **Program Assessment:** B.A. English
 - All English B.A. graduates are required to take either the Humanities Capstone course or complete a thesis or internship. In each of these options students typically present their final work through community presentations, thesis defenses, etc. Starting in Fall 18, at least two English faculty members will attend each of these events or presentations, and using the above outcomes as a rubric, create a “scorecard” to evaluate each student in those areas.
 - We will use these “scorecards” to assess the program outcomes at the following faculty meeting. Typically students defend or finish their final projects in December or April, so in the faculty meeting in January or September, we set aside time to review the scorecards and then offer any changes.
 - Note: For thesis students, we have created more specific guidelines for expectations. In our assessment cycle in AY 17-18 we made three specific changes to the process in response to problems we had seen in previous projects:
 - 1) Students must get approval to begin project from more than one faculty member
 - 2) Students will write a reflective letter/analysis on their own work, and specifically addressing the degree outcomes
 - 3) Faculty will use a template syllabus to ensure student learning outcomes are being met in each project, and each project is roughly the same length/quality as the others.
 - During AY 17/18 program faculty updated the SLOs for both thesis and internship students:
 - **ENGL 499 – Thesis**
Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:
 1. Produce a manuscript in a specific genre or discipline.
 2. Demonstrate professional behavior in working with faculty mentor.
 3. Demonstrate independent working skills.
 4. Demonstrate critical thinking skills in the project being undertaken.
 5. Defend his/her work to an evaluation committee.

- **ENGL S491 – Internship**

Students successfully completing this course will be able to:

1. Show that he/she can successfully perform the required tasks required for this specific internship.
2. Demonstrate professional behavior in working with employers or mentors.
3. Demonstrate success and independence in a working situation.
4. Demonstrate critical thinking skills in the project being undertaken.

- **Course Assessment:** Composition, Literature, Creative Writing Courses

- On a two-year cycle, we assess every WRTG and ENGL course being taught on all three campuses. In the fall of 2017 we assessed all the ENGL courses, and in the fall of 2018 we assessed all the WRTG courses.
- During our convocation meeting, when faculty from all three campuses are in the room, we set aside two hours to complete the bulk of our investigations. For each course, we create “assessment groups.” For example, this fall we had one group for 090/110, one for 111, one for 211, and then one for 212. Each group has a faculty chair, one who has taught the course a number of times. Faculty are assigned groups by the Directors of Writing but can elect to change groups if they want.

- Assessment Groups, Fall 18:

- Directors of Writing: Emily Wall and Rod Landis
 - WRTG 090/110: Ernestine Hayes (chair), Rod Landis, Will Elliott, Geoff Kirsch.
 - WRTG 111: Kevin Maier (chair), Math Trafton, Teague Whalen, Stephen Florian, Richard Simpson
 - WRTG 211: Sol Neely (chair), Emily Wall, Allison Neeland
 - WRTG 212: Emily Wall (chair), Dawn Montgomery
- Prior to convocation, faculty members send the Directors of Writing paper samples with instructor comments and a copy of their syllabi. The Directors of Writing compile these into reading packets and distribute.
 - During the convocation meeting each group reads through the artifacts and compares them to the SLOs for that particular course. Each group then makes a list of observations and/or recommendations. The faculty have found the open conversation during these meetings to be the most valuable aspect of this assessment work. Ideas are shared about assignments, problems are discussed, and new approaches are tried. We find that often we end up wanting to slightly revise course descriptions and/or SLOs.

- After convocation the chair of each group is responsible for producing a 2-5 page report on the group findings. Emily Wall, as Co-Director of Writing, compiles all the reports and creates a comprehensive assessment report that is then shared with all faculty who teach these courses (including adjunct faculty).
 - Note: We invite all adjunct faculty to be part of these conversations and find this time to be a good mentoring opportunity.
- **Additional Assessment:** WRTG 110, Writing Center, Pilot Programs
 - **WRTG 110:** With WRTG 110, we undergo more rigorous assessment. In addition to the above practices, we also assess assignments, SLOs, and student success four times a year, at each portfolio reading. Students in WRTG 110 submit a portfolio of papers at mid-term and at finals time. Students must pass the portfolio to pass the class. Portfolios are read by the Directors of Writing (Emily in Juneau, Rod in Ketchikan) and a panel of faculty, both part-time and tenure-track. Each reading session begins with a “norming” session where everyone participating rates several papers and then compares scores and notes. After the reading, we have an assessment session where we compare assignments, discuss problems, and share ideas. This is a particularly valuable exercise for adjuncts who benefit from the mentoring of more senior faculty like Professor Ernestine Hayes and Professor Rod Landis. After each of the four reading sessions Professors Landis and Wall collect data on pass rates, and create a mini-report of questions, ideas, problems, analysis of SLOs, etc. and share with all English faculty. We take particular note of any section that has a higher-than-normal no-pass number, and of any students who are taking the class more than once. This conversation often centers around students barriers to success and we brainstorm ways to solve any of the issues we can address.
 - **Writing Center:** For the past two years Allison Neeland, Writing Center Specialist, has joined regularly scheduled department meetings, WRTG 110 portfolio reading sessions, and the convocation assessment meeting. This allows us to add to the conversation our observations and concerns about how students work in the writing center. Having Allison in the room with English faculty has been very beneficial to our analysis of how our writing classes are being taught. Allison provides feedback on any concerns students bring to her as well. (Sometimes they are willing to share concerns with her that they may not feel comfortable sharing with faculty.) English faculty can also offer guidance and ideas about the tutoring process.
 - **Pilot Programs:** Thanks to the leadership of Ernestine Hayes, we've also been pushing ourselves to pilot programs each year that will best serve our students, and particularly our lower-level students who have traditionally not had high success rates. In our meetings we share ideas, discuss any pilots we are trying, and make changes to what we're doing. We are especially thankful to have Allison Neeland as part of these programs.

DATA COLLECTED ON PROGRAM SLOs DURING AY 18-19

- **Program Data:**

- **Thesis:** In 2018/19 we had no thesis projects. This is unusual for us, and we are in conversation about why this might have happened. Typically we have 2-3 thesis projects a year.
- **Internships:** In AY 18-19 we had 4 internships.
 - **India Busby**, *Tidal Echoes intern*, Spring 18
 - **Elizabeth Rumfelt**, *Tidal Echoes intern*, Spring 18
 - **Annie Kessler**: *Tidal Echoes intern*, Fall 18
 - **Blake Fletcher**: Flying University intern, Spring 18
- **Capstone:** In the past academic year no B.A. English student took the HUM 499 class. (Note: Several BLA students with an emphasis in English took the course).

- **Course Data:** In AY 18-19 we collected papers (with a range of grades) and syllabi from the following courses, from a number of faculty who taught them:

- WRTG 090
- WRTG 110
- WRTG 111
- WRTG 211
- WRTG 212

- **Additional Data:** In AY 18-19 we held our usual WRTG 110 mid-term and final portfolio reading sessions.

- In Spring 18, at mid-term, we evaluated 7 portfolios
- In Spring 18, at finals, we evaluated 6 portfolios
- In Fall 18, at mid-term, we evaluated 66 portfolios
- In Fall 18, at finals, we evaluated 65 portfolios

EVALUATION OF DATA COLLECTED ON PROGRAM SLOs DURING AY 18-19

- Program Data:
 - Internships:
 - **India Busby**, *Tidal Echoes intern*, Spring 18
 - Faculty Evaluation: Professor Emily Wall supervised this internship and she found that India met most of the outcomes. She did note that India struggled with independence—she needed a lot of guidance. She was the “junior editor” during this internship so there is a big learning curve, but Emily will work with her during the spring 19 internship when she will be “senior editor” to encourage more independence.
 - **Elizabeth Rumfelt**, *Tidal Echoes intern*, Spring 18
 - Faculty Evaluation: Professor Emily Wall supervised this internship and she found that Elizabeth met all of the SLOs for internships, which reflect the outcomes we hope to see in our graduating students. Professor Wall did note Elizabeth’s reluctance to take as much leadership as we’d like to see, and will brainstorm ways to encourage this with future interns.
 - **Annie Kessler**: *Tidal Echoes intern*, Fall 18
 - Faculty Evaluation: Professor Emily Wall supervised this internship and she found that Annie met all of the SLOs for internships, which reflect the outcomes we hope to see in our graduating students. In particular she notes the creativity Annie showed in coming up with new methods and ideas for reaching out to the community and Professor Wall noted she’d like to encourage this kind of creativity in future interns.
 - Student Evaluation: Annie was the first student to write a self-evaluation using our new process. Here is her written reflection:

I believe I was able to successfully perform the tasks required for this internship. One of my major projects was soliciting submission from the Southeast region. This year we had 434 submissions, which is the most we have ever received. I made an effort to reach out to as many communities in the region as possible so that people would be aware of the opportunity to submit. Given the distance and inability to travel between communities, this was not an easy task. It took some creative thinking and problem solving to find contacts. While there are communities where I hoped to have more interaction, overall I think the volume and location of submissions shows that I did an effective job sharing Tidal Echoes throughout the region.

This internship gave the opportunity to work with mentors and community members in a professional capacity. I was stretched outside my comfort zone multiple times by participating in local events to make announcements or through participating in a radio interview on KTOO. It was important to me to present a professional appearance and attitude, as well as demonstrate my professionalism by following through with community contacts. I strive to be organized and on time, and this experience gave me a lot of practice with those skills.

Most of the work in this internship was done independently. I had to be organized to keep track of the many tasks and complete them in a timely manner. It definitely required time management and planning skills. My weekly meetings with my supervisor were helpful in tracking my progress and planning for the week ahead.

Interviewing the featured artist and featured writer required research, planning, and follow-through. I feel like this part of the internship was very important in developing critical thinking skills. I had to know enough about my interviewee to ask insightful questions, yet keep in mind the general audience of the eventual printed interview. Transcribing and writing up the interviews also required critical thinking skills, as did the process of revision. My supervisor was very helpful in guiding me through this process.

My experience with Tidal Echoes was very positive. As a writer, it gave me a lot of insight into another side of the publishing industry. I learned a lot about the process of submission and how a journal is put together. It also helped me to develop community contacts and experiences. I am very grateful for the opportunity to be part of Tidal Echoes this year.

- **Blake Fletcher: (Sol)** In Fall 2012, Professor Sol Neely began taking UAS students inside Lemon Creek Correctional Center (LCCC) for mutual and collaborative study. This education endeavor became known as the Flying University, growing in size over the years and becoming a reentry effort as much as a prison education effort. For the Spring 2018 semester, Professor Neely worked with other English faculty members to develop an internship opportunity for our graduating seniors. UAS Student, Blake Fletcher, became the first student to serve as Flying University intern. As an intern, Blake logged in 150 hours of service that included a variety of tasks and learning outcomes including (1) recording an oral history of the Flying University by interviewing formerly incarcerated Flying University students, former UAS (“outside”) students who participated in seminar, and former guest faculty; (2) promoting the Flying University through appearances on KTOO’s “A Juneau Afternoon” and *Whalesong*; (3) organizing tutorial sessions inside LCCC to help students enrolled in Prof. Neely’s PHIL 201 class succeed; and (4) helping organize minor administrative tasks including corresponding with LCCC Education Coordinator, Paul McCarthy. Blake utilized his theoretical and practical skills developed through the English program to fulfill his obligations to the internship. In the wake of Blake’s success, Professor Neely will offer Spring internships for Flying University students into the future, connecting students with public officials and community supporters as well as local media outlets and resources. Each internship will be tailored to the student’s strengths and interests but, in all instances, fulfill the UAS Mission Statement.

- **Capstone:** One of our biggest assessment discussions this past regarded the capstone course. In the past, this has been a course a number of our students have taken and enjoyed, but in recent years, and in particular this past year, that has not been the case. We have identified a number of problems with this option in the degree:
 - Compared to previous years, fewer B.A. English students are electing to take this option, favoring instead the internships or thesis. (In the B.A. there are 3 streams and the creative writing students do not have the option to take this course—it's only the literature and environmental literature students who have this option.)
 - Those who have taken it online have had very poor experiences and have come to their advisors with a number of complaints, many of which revolve around unfair grading practices, lack of respect to students, and even racist incidents.
 - Finally, we recognize that it's fairly rare for one of the full time faculty in Juneau to teach that course, which makes it more difficult for us to assess the students in this course (and thus the program).

We spent quite a bit of time as a regional faculty brainstorming solutions. The most obvious of them, is that we drop the capstone option for the B.A. students as it's also being dropped for the B.L.A. The group also suggested other ideas such as the option for students to take additional credit in conjunction with an upper division literature course. We didn't come to a consensus on a solution, but will continue to discuss this. We are all in agreement that in its current form, the HUM 499 is *not* a valuable experience for our graduating students and does not help us assess our program.

- **Course Data:**

- **WRTG 090/110 Data**

Group: Ernestine Hayes (chair), Rod Landis, Will Elliott, Geoff Kirsch.

The WRTG 090/110 Assessment Group read through sample papers and considered the existing SLOs for WR090 and WR110. The group decided to discuss both courses together as it allowed them to also evaluate the accelerated course, which has students from both levels.

Sample assignments for each class were discussed to ascertain to what degree assignments addressed multiple aspects of the UAS Mission, including faculty creative expression, and cultures and environments of Southeast Alaska. The group agreed that incorporating these elements was a helpful practice likely to lead to student success.

- **WRTG 111 Data**

Group: Kevin (chair), Math Trafton, Teague Whalen, Stephen Florian, Richard Simpson

The WRTG 111 Assessment Group read through sample papers and syllabi. They began by assessing sample student essays. They found a high level of agreement in assessing two sample papers—they all read a C and a B papers, and in blind grading, were within +/- 5 points on a 100-point scale.

- **WRTG 211 Data**

Group: Sol Neely (chair), Emily Wall, Allison Neeland

The ENGL 211 Assessment Group began by consulting the 2016 assessment report and the updated SLOs as a baseline before they started to read syllabi and papers. After reading through and discussing the sample papers and reviewing course syllabi, they are again in accord that students are completing the course having achieved the published student learning outcomes.

- **WRTG 212 Data**

Group: Emily Wall (chair), Dawn Montgomery

The department has struggled to find a faculty to teach this course consistently on the Juneau campus. Emily Wall, Co-Director of Writing, took on the task of evaluating this. She requested work from Dawn Montgomery who teaches the course regularly in Ketchikan. Emily started with the 2016 assessment report and SLOs, then read the syllabus and one end-of-semester project. She discussed her analysis of them with Dawn Montgomery.

FUTURE PLANS TO IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING

- **Program Assessment**

- **Thesis:** We will evaluate the first thesis project we oversee with our new process.
- **Internship:** We are happy with the way the internships are proceeding and with the outcomes demonstrated by the students. We have no plans to change the internship course at this time.
- **Capstone:** We will actively seek a solution to the problems in this course and hope to have a proposal by the end of this academic year.

- **Course Assessment**

- **WRTG 090/110 Current Recommendations:**

- Incorporate information regarding elements of UAS Mission in course assignments for WRTG 090 and WRTG 110.
- Provide marked papers for review by assessment committee.
- Develop an effective process to gauge reading strategies.

Recommendations and responses from previous years' assessment work:

- Recommendation: Require a paragraph addressing the writing process either in the Final Portfolio cover letter, or alternately in discussion of the student's "starred" essay in the Final Portfolio.
 - Response: This requirement is understood to be part of impromptu instructions in the 110 portfolio process.
- Recommendation: Reward #1 ("Write college-level essays of moderate length (3-4 pages)") to read, "Write college-level essays of moderate length (3-4 pages), containing a clear main point or message."
 - Response: The Composition co-directors have considered this suggestion.
- Recommendation: Reward #8 ("Demonstrate the process of analysis and the part it plays in determining a focus for certain types of writing") to read, "Attempt one piece of writing centered on analysis."
 - Response: The Composition co-directors have considered this suggestion.
- Recommendation: ENGL 111 professors should be encouraged to participate in 110 assessment activities. The group also strongly encourages all English faculty to participate in these 110 portfolio readings.
 - Response: Participation from all English and Writing faculty is solicited, with participation by 111 professors and others as their schedules allow.

- Recommendation: Mentoring of novice ENGL 110 instructors, and early intervention when problems are first noticed, for all instructors. ENGL 110 assessment is a collaborative process. All instructors should be encouraged to make sure that every 110 assignment addresses one or more of the SLOs. Reading the student papers and discussing them informally reinforced general agreement on our assessments of the student writing involved. Multiple drafts and sample syllabi would also be helpful for future assessment exercises. ENGL 110 has long had a robust assessment process, and suggestions included here are meant to strengthen it even further.
 - Response: The Composition Co-Directors are taking steps to incorporate these suggestions into regular department meetings and activities.

We find this assessment process extremely helpful and commend the UAS Do-Directors of composition for their hard work and dedication to student success.

- **WRTG 111 Recommendations:**

We found a high level of agreement in assessing two sample papers—we all read a C and a B paper, and in our blind grading, we were within +/- 5 points on a 100-point scale. In particular, students uniformly met the SLOs in satisfactory way. While the fourth SLO—“demonstrate a critical engagement with the cultures and environments of Southeast Alaska”—was potentially difficult to assess, we agreed that it is an important one. Though hard to assess with single representative student paper, we agree that faculty should be encouraged to include elements in course design that help students achieve this outcome.

Due to limitations of the available sample essays, which instead focused on getting a range of grades and across sections, we did not get a series of drafts. While we don't think it is necessary to have a range of drafts for a single papers for the purpose of our assessment, we do recommend having a range of grades. However, we think it would improve our process to look at only final papers from each 111 class—or good papers in addition to mid-range papers.

We found that looking at syllabi and having a broad discussion about course design was also helpful, and that the SLOs—now consistent statewide through the BOR mandated alignment process—are broad enough to allow for a multitude of approaches in the classes themselves. Consistent course descriptions were at once very different, but they also all hit on the outcomes as outlined in the SLOs. This diversity of pedagogy nevertheless lead to consistent achievement of SLOs.

Overall, we recommend that we stay the course on WRTG 111.

- **211 Recommendations:**

It is worth noting that what stands out at UAS regarding the delivery of WRTG 211, is the rich pedagogical diversity that faculty bring to teaching the course. This diversity brings innovation and a certain level of interdisciplinary breadth to our course delivery, but also allows us to discern a wide variety of intellectual and critical values unique to each faculty member. This feature of our WRTG 211 delivery keeps in line with SLO #3—students will be able to “demonstrate consistent use of a broad range of conventions and genres that conforms to the goals of writing in the humanities.”

Nevertheless, despite the pedagogical diversity, we also discerned during this year’s assessment meeting that we do, in fact, share a couple of common values that all of us bring to the course:

- (1) We all implement good evaluation strategies and feedback. In one way or another, faculty utilize a variety of one-on-one student conference, either for pre-paper organization or for formative and summative project assessment.
- (2) We all frame issues and have students frame issues in order to fulfill SLO #1 of “contribut[ing] to an ongoing conversation in the humanities.”
- (3) We all require students address historical context to establish perspective for the texts—which is related to a competency we identified in 2016 as valuable—viz., the ability for students to connect their personal questions with broader philosophical and political concerns.

We also identified areas of pedagogical and curricular emphasis that we want to work on developing before the next assessment cycle. We want to develop new, more creative, research strategies for students to incorporate within their work. We want to see students developing research that doesn’t just feed them contexts and meaning “already made.” In the WRTG 211 context, we find students lacking in robust “creative research” protocol—so, in the future, we want to incorporate this emphasis better in our subject matter and in our teaching and learning outcomes.

Related to this concern for more robust and creative research protocol is a difficulty for students identified by UAS Writing Center director, Allison Neeland. Allison rightly observes that many of the student obstacles toward more effective composition skills concern not so much writing but reading comprehension. Toward this end, we want to incorporate greater emphasis on reading comprehension within our WRTG 211 classes—and, in fact, this is a value we have identified and marked as more urgent across all our composition courses.

- **212 Current Recommendations:**

We currently have struggled to find a faculty to teach this course consistently on the Juneau campus. Emily Wall requested work from Dawn Montgomery who teaches the course regularly in Ketchikan.

Concerns from 2016 Assessment:

1. Revision of the current SLOs is imperative; they are occasionally repetitive, vague and indeterminate.
2. Many students do not grasp certain important technical writing factors including heading hierarchy, concision, clear visuals, and the difference between the abstract and the introduction.
3. A lack of continuity between the two technical writing classes should be addressed.

Actions Taken:

1. **SLOs** – After the last assessment, the 212 SLOs were updated with collaboration between Professor Enge and Professor Wall. Those updated SLOs were approved by the department and submitted by Professor Math Trafton to the Curriculum Committee.
2. **Technical Writing Factors** –Emily compared this year's sample to the one from two years ago and found the writing better met the goals stated in the SLOs. However, she also reviewed the syllabus and was concerned as it appears the students only write a single assignment.

Proposed Activity: The English Coordinator proposes to suggest both Sitka and Ketchikan faculty review adjunct syllabi to ensure the assignments meet our expectations for each course (number of papers, number of words, SLOs, etc.). Each adjunct, even long-term ones, should be offered sample syllabi and directed to the Composition Handbook.

Proposed Activity: As part of this analysis process, Emily Wall and Rod Landis have reviewed the Composition Handbook (found online) and propose to revise and update this handbook along with all the other online materials for Composition and English at UAS.

3. **Lack of Continuity** – This issue remains a concern. The benefits of evaluating course progress with a peer are unquestionable, however, this evaluation is impractical as this course has been taught by several adjuncts, only one of whom is available for this assessment activity. Emily Wall will be teaching 212 for the first time this summer and she hopes to make it part of her regular workload. This would ensure at least one tenure track faculty member is teaching this course.

Proposed Activity: The English Coordinator continues to review all syllabi of adjuncts and continues to mentor them in regards to SLOs, writing expectations, and continuity with other courses.

After reviewing the sample report the faculty found the work demonstrates all of the SLOs except #4, which we anticipate may be difficult to do in every writing sample.

Concerns from 2018 Assessment:

1. Sample syllabus did not contain a “broad range of genres” (or it wasn’t clear in the syllabus).
2. Should the SLOs be updated again?
 - a. Greater emphasis on syntax and graphical knowledge
 - b. More emphasis on multiple genres

Proposed Actions:

1. Write/update expectations for the types of assignments in WRTG 212 (Directors of Writing).
2. Revise SLOs

- **Teaching Innovations/Pilot Programs to Improve Student Success:**

- **Embedded Tutors:** This year Allison Neeland, Emily Wall, and Kevin Maier piloted an “embedded tutor” program. This was part of a CELT initiative introduced to UAS by Allison Neeland. An embedded tutor is one who works in the Writing Center but is assigned a particular class and spends more time *in* that classroom working directly with the students. The tutor is also trained by the professor in the specifics of that course’s assignments, expectations, etc.

In an effort to develop the UAS core competency of communication, the Writing Center in conjunction with the English department piloted an embedded tutor program to place writing tutors in classes to support students as writers across content areas. The Writing Center trained three student tutors to provide support in four classes: WRTG110, WRTG211, COMM111, and COMM218. An additional tutor (who was not hired or trained by the Writing Center) received independent study credit for her work as an embedded tutor in a section of WRTG111.

Emily and Kevin each implemented this program in their fall writing courses (211 and 111) in slightly different ways. Here are the brief descriptions and analyses:

- **WRTG 211 (Emily Wall):** Prof. Wall invited one of the newer Writing Center tutors, who had taken her WRTG 211 in the previous spring, to be the embedded tutor in her fall course. Emily met several times with Jacqueline (the tutor) to train her in the specifics of course assignments, review A+ papers, talk about specific problems arising, etc. Jacqueline came into the course when assignments were being discussed, worked with students and read papers during in-class workshop sessions, and held “office hours” in the Writing Center for the course. At the end of the

semester Allison developed a student survey and Emily distributed it to the students. The students were mostly happy with the experiment, asking only for more “office hours” for the tutor. Emily found it somewhat valuable, and noted that while it allows for more in-class help, it also limited her time with each student as some worked more with Jacqueline. Emily plans to run this again with some changes to address some of the specific problems she saw with this model. She is collaborating with Allison on this.

- **WRTG 111 (Kevin Maier):** During fall semester Kevin Maier facilitated a 1-credit independent study, working with an advanced student as an embedded tutor for his Writing 111 course. Unfortunately, the student wasn’t able to attend the 111 class session, as she had a course at the same time, but the graduating student learned a great deal about teaching writing, the tutoring process, and about commenting on student writing. Bi-weekly meetings about pedagogy and assignments allowed the student to be a super-tutor to the students in the course who chose to take advantage of her office hours. This ongoing dialogue with Professor Maier meant she was better prepared than a standard writing center tutor. He hopes to improve on this process in the future, and recommends having the tutor attend class more frequently, and mandating that each student in the writing class have a session with the tutor.

The chart below reflects the results of an end-of-the-semester survey that we distributed in the WRTG211 class.

Our student-focused goals	Students reported...		
	Yes	No	Neutral or N/A
Students gained confidence in writing.	85%	0%	15%
Students built stronger connections to a writing tutor.	96%	1%	3%
Students used the Writing Center more as a result of the in-class support.	31%	69%	0%

We are continuing to test the program in HIST105, WRTG111, and COMM111 in Spring 2019. Our hope is that other faculty will be willing to work with an embedded tutor to increase students’ written communication skills across content areas.

- **Studio Course: (Allison Neeland):** In Fall 2018 we offered Composition Studio (WRTG104) as a one credit support class for students who were on the cusp of testing into WRTG111. This studio course provided additional instruction and support for students so they could enroll and succeed in college level writing without first having to take a semester of developmental writing. Twelve students were encouraged to enroll in WRTG104, but only four actually did. Of those four, three passed their WRTG111 class and one is retaking it this semester. Students’ comments on the end-of-the-semester course evaluation were

overwhelmingly positive:

- “First off, I was very thankful to be a part of this class. It helped me with Writing 111 and helped me to improve my writing skills in general... In the past, I was always panicking when I had a rough draft of an essay, or just a part of an essay. I never knew where to begin, what to add, what to fix. In this class, each week I was able to focus primarily on one thing and improve that, not worrying about everything else. This also helped me with my weekly online posts.”
 - “I really enjoyed the 1 on 1 help I received. I also like how my professor was invested into making us better writers.”
 - “I have taken many writing classes in my learning of English. Instructor helped me understand sentence structure better than any instructor I have ever had.”
- **Hybrid WRTG Course:** Dr. Elliott has taught multiple WRTG 111 sections as “hybrid” courses, which meet 2 hours in person, and 1 hour asynchronously online.

One goal of this approach is to accommodate nontraditional students and students with complicated schedules (e.g., work, childcare). In 2018–2019, there were five nontraditional students enrolled in the hybrid sections, versus one nontraditional student enrolled in Dr. Elliott’s regular WRTG 111 course.

Another goal for the hybrid format is to help students establish a habit of writing regularly. Here the results have been positive, but mixed: on the one hand, students with good study skills benefit from the weekly consistency of writing, and were able to develop their major assignments at a steady pace with regular feedback. However, students who are still developing basic study skills such as checking campus email and accessing course readings online were at risk of falling behind, since the online format demands more self-direction and initiative from students than a traditional classroom setting. Dr. Elliott believes this can be addressed by offering these students more support.

This points to a final issue worth considering: overall, the hybrid courses seem to require more instructor labor than a traditional course, due to the need to enter 30% of the course into an online system (rather than delivering it verbally in person)—and this labor is often multiplied individually for each student. For new faculty, this may be a helpful imposition of structure and a good way to develop detailed, organized course materials; others may find it cumbersome.

Overall, the hybrid format has been successful, an assessment supported by student course evaluations, generally in the 4–5 range for Dr. Elliott’s hybrid WRTG 111 sections.

APPENDIX A: ASSESSMENT GROUP REPORTS

WRTG 090/110 Assessment Group Report

Group: Ernestine Hayes, Rod Landis, Will Elliott, Geoff Kirsch.

The WR090/WR110 Assessment Group read through sample papers and considered the existing SLOs for WR090 and WR110. Additionally, the group read through sample assignments for each class.

Sample assignments for each class were discussed to ascertain to what degree assignments addressed multiple aspects of the UAS Mission, for example, faculty creative expression, cultures and environments of Southeast Alaska. The group agreed that incorporating these elements was a helpful practice likely to lead to student success.

In addition, the group agreed that it was helpful to see instructor comments on the graded papers. In the past, clean copies of student work have been submitted for review; however, marked copies appear more helpful in developing ways to support student success. One group member suggested that the best way to see improvement in the proffered writing samples would be to obtain two drafts, one with professor's comments and one after the student has responded to the comments. Such a process would require more organization on the part of the instructor providing the samples. The professor who offered marked papers for review requires students to submit a polished draft which is returned to the student with professor's comments, after which the student is required to respond to professor's comments and then submit a final draft.

In particular, the marked WR090 paper submitted for review specifically addressed SLO #2 because of the metacognitive strategy on the instructor's part in assigning the course syllabus as a text for writing about UAS competencies. With regard to another SLO, however, assessing whether sample papers demonstrated appropriate reading strategies was a more difficult endeavor. An effective process that allows professors to gauge reading strategies is an important consideration. Incoming 111 students often exhibit borderline reading scores, and as reading difficulties undermine student success across the curriculum, it is suggested that an effective process to assess student mastery of reading strategy be developed.

Current Recommendations:

Incorporate information regarding elements of UAS Mission in course assignments for WR090 and WR110.

Provide marked papers for review by assessment committee.

Develop an effective process to gauge reading strategies.

Recommendations and responses from previous years:

Recommendation: Require a paragraph addressing the writing process either in the Final Portfolio cover letter, or alternately in discussion of the student's "starred" essay in the Final Portfolio.

Response: This requirement is understood to be part of impromptu instructions in the 110 portfolio process.

Recommendation: Reword #1 ("Write college-level essays of moderate length (3-4 pages)") to read, "Write college-level essays of moderate length (3-4 pages), containing a clear main point or message."

Response: The Composition co-directors have considered this suggestion.

Recommendation: Reword #8 ("Demonstrate the process of analysis and the part it plays in determining a focus for certain types of writing") to read, "Attempt one piece of writing centered on analysis."

Response: The Composition co-directors have considered this suggestion.

Recommendation: ENGL 111 professors should be encouraged to participate in 110 assessment activities. The group also strongly encourages all English faculty to participate in these 110 portfolio readings.

Response: Participation from all English and Writing faculty is solicited, with participation by 111 professors and others as their schedules allow.

Recommendation: Mentoring of novice ENGL 110 instructors, and early intervention when problems are first noticed, for all instructors. ENGL 110 assessment is a collaborative process. All instructors should be encouraged to make sure that every 110 assignment addresses one or more of the SLOs. Reading the student papers and discussing them informally reinforced general agreement on our assessments of the student writing involved. Multiple drafts and sample syllabi would also be helpful for future assessment exercises. ENGL 110 has long had a robust assessment process, and suggestions included here are meant to strengthen it even further.

Response: The Composition co-directors are taking steps to incorporate these suggestions into regular department meetings and activities.

We find this assessment process extremely helpful and commend the UAS co-directors of composition for their hard work and dedication to student success.

Rod Landis
Ernestine Hayes
Will Elliott
Geoff Kirsch

WRTG 111 Assessment Group Report

*2018: We began by assessing sample student essays. We found a high level of agreement in assessing two sample papers—we all read a C and a B paper, and in our blind grading, we were within +/- 5 points on a 100-point scale. In particular, students uniformly met the SLOs in satisfactory way. While the fourth SLO—“demonstrate a critical engagement with the cultures and environments of Southeast Alaska”—was potentially difficult to assess, we agreed that it is an important one. Though hard to assess with single representative student paper, we agree that faculty should be encouraged to include elements in course design that help students achieve this outcome.

Due to limitations of the available sample essays, which instead focused on getting a range of grades and across sections, we did not get a series of drafts. While we don't think it is necessary to have a range drafts for a single papers for the purpose of our assessment, we do recommend having a range of grades. However, we think it would improve our process to look at only final papers from each 111 class—or good papers in addition to mid-range papers.

We found that looking at syllabi and having a broad discussion about course design was also helpful, and that the SLOs—now consistent statewide through the BOR mandated alignment process—are broad enough to allow for a multitude of approaches in the classes themselves. Consistent course descriptions were at once very different, but they also all hit on the outcomes as outlined in the SLOs. This diversity of pedagogy nevertheless lead to consistent achievement of SLOs.

Overall, we recommend that we stay the course on WRTG 111.

WRTG 211 Assessment Group Report

The ENGL 211 Assessment Group began by consulting our 2016 assessment report to compare that with our assessment concerns for 2018. After reading through and discussing the sample papers and reviewing course syllabi, we are again in accord that students are completing the course having achieved the published student learning outcomes.

It is worth preserving a particular note about the what stands out at UAS regarding the delivery of WRTG 211, which is the rich pedagogical diversity that faculty bring to teaching the course. This diversity brings innovation and a certain level of interdisciplinary breadth to our course delivery, but also allows us to discern a wide variety of intellectual and critical values unique to each faculty member. This feature of our WRTG 211 delivery keeps in line with SLO #3—Students will be able to “demonstrate consistent use of a broad range of conventions and genres that conforms to the goals of writing in the humanities.”

Nevertheless, despite the pedagogical diversity, we also discerned during this year’s assessment meeting that we do, in fact, share a couple of common values that all of us bring to the course:

- (1) We all implement good evaluation strategies and feedback: In one way or another, faculty utilize a variety of one-on-one student conference, either for pre-paper organization or for formative and summative project assessment.
- (2) We all frame issues and have students frame issues in order to fulfill SLO #1 of “contribut[ing] to an ongoing conversation in the humanities.”
- (3) We all require students address historical context to establish perspective for the texts—which is related to a competency we identified in 2016 as valuable—viz., the ability for students to connect their personal questions with broader philosophical and political concerns.

We also identified areas of pedagogical and curricular emphasis that we want to work on developing before the next assessment cycle. We want to develop new, more creative, research strategies for students to incorporate within their work. We want to see students developing research that doesn’t just feed them contexts and meaning “already made.” In the WRTG 211 context, we find students lacking in robust “creative research” protocol—so, in the future, we want to incorporate this emphasis better in our subject matter and in our teaching and learning outcomes.

Related to this concern for more robust and creative research protocol is a difficulty for students identified by UAS Writing Center director, Allison Neeland. Allison rightly observes that much of the student obstacles toward more effective composition skills concerns not so much writing but reading comprehension. Toward this end, we want to incorporate greater emphasis on reading comprehension within our WRTG 211 classes—and, in fact, this is a value we have identified and marked as more urgent across all our composition courses.

WRTG 212 Assessment Group Report

We currently have struggled to find a faculty to teach this course consistently on the Juneau campus. Emily Wall, co-director of writing, took on the task of evaluating this. She requested work from Dawn Montgomery who teaches the course regularly in Ketchikan (Dawn offered to help assess, but didn't end up being able to participate).

CONCERNs FROM 2016 ASSESSMENT:

1. **Revision of the current SLOs** is imperative; they are occasionally repetitive, vague and indeterminate.
2. Many students do not grasp certain **important technical writing factors** including heading hierarchy, concision, clear visuals, and the difference between the abstract and the introduction.
3. **A lack of continuity between the two technical writing classes** should be addressed.

ACTIONS TAKEN:

SLOs – After the last assessment, the 212 SLOs were updated with collaboration between Professor Enge and Professor Wall. Those updated SLOs were approved by the department and submitted by Professor Math Trafton to the Curriculum Committee.

Technical Writing Factors –Emily compared this year's sample to the one from two years ago and found the writing better met the goals stated in the SLOs. However, she also reviewed the syllabus and was concerned as it appears the students only write a single assignment.

Proposed Activity: The English Coordinator proposes to suggest both Sitka and Ketchikan faculty review adjunct syllabi to ensure the assignments meet our expectations for each course (number of papers, number of words, SLOs, etc.). Each adjunct, even long-term ones, should be offered sample syllabi and directed to the Composition Handbook.

Lack of Continuity – This issue remains a concern. The benefits of evaluating course progress with a peer are unquestionable; however, this evaluation is impractical as this course has been taught by several adjuncts, only one of whom is available for this assessment activity.

Proposed Activity (2018): The English Coordinator continues to review all syllabi of adjuncts and continues to mentor them in regards to SLOs, writing expectations, and continuity with other courses.

UPDATED SLOs (FALL 17)

WRTG 212 Writing and the Professions

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Frame an issue to an established audience, engage divergent perspectives on that issue, and contribute to an ongoing conversation in the professions.
2. Interpret texts and data by applying professional frameworks.
3. Demonstrate consistent use of a broad range of conventions and genres that conform to the goals of writing in the professions.
4. Demonstrate a critical engagement with the cultures and environments of Southeast Alaska.

After reviewing the sample report the faculty found the work demonstrates all of the SLOs except #4, which we anticipate may be difficult to do in every writing sample.

QUESTIONS: CONCERNs FROM 2018 ASSESSMENT:

3. Sample syllabus did not contain a "broad range of genres" (or it wasn't clear in the syllabus).
4. Should the SLOs be updated again?

- a. Greater emphasis on syntax and graphical knowledge
- b. More emphasis on multiple genres

Proposed Actions:

- 3. Write/update expectations for the types of assignments in WRTG 212 (Directors of Writing).
- 4. Revise SLOs
- 5. Update Composition Handbook

APPENDIX B: WRITING COURSES: STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (SLOs)

Following are the student learning outcomes for every English course offered. They are currently passing through the curriculum committee.

WRTG 090 Writing and Reading Strategies

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Produce thoughtful responses and accurate summaries of academic texts.
2. Use metacognitive strategies to enhance critical reading and comprehension of academic texts.
3. Write well-developed, coherent paragraphs and short essays to respond to specific rhetorical contexts.

WRTG 110 Introduction to College Writing

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Critically interpret and evaluate their own and others' texts.
2. Apply appropriate reading processes to assigned readings and individualized research for use in basic academic essays.
3. Write brief academic essays shaped by effective writing processes and appropriately supported by texts to achieve specific purposes.

WRTG 111 Writing Across Contexts

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Establish credibility and persuasive power for an audience.
2. Interpret the meaning of a text based on its features, context, design, and relationship to other texts.
3. Respond purposefully to specific rhetorical situations.
4. Demonstrate a critical engagement with the cultures and environments of Southeast Alaska.

WRTG 211 Writing and the Humanities

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Frame an issue to an established audience, engage divergent perspectives on that issue, and contribute to an ongoing conversation in the humanities.
2. Interpret texts and data by applying theoretical frameworks from the humanities.
3. Demonstrate consistent use of a broad range of conventions and genres that conform to the goals of writing in the humanities.

4. Demonstrate a critical engagement with the cultures and environments of Southeast Alaska.

WRTG 212 Writing and the Professions

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

5. Frame an issue to an established audience, engage divergent perspectives on that issue, and contribute to an ongoing conversation in the professions.
6. Interpret texts and data by applying professional frameworks.
7. Demonstrate consistent use of a broad range of conventions and genres that conform to the goals of writing in the professions.
8. Demonstrate a critical engagement with the cultures and environments of Southeast Alaska.

ENGL S491 – Internship

Students successfully completing this course will be able to:

1. Show that he/she can successfully perform the required tasks required for this specific internship.
2. Demonstrate professional behavior in working with employers or mentors.
3. Demonstrate success and independence in a working situation.
4. Demonstrate critical thinking skills in the project being undertaken.

ENGL S499 – English Thesis

Students successfully completing this course will be able to:

1. Produce a successful manuscript in the genre or discipline he/she is working in
2. Demonstrate professional behavior in working with faculty mentor
3. Demonstrate independent working skills.
4. Demonstrate critical thinking skills in the project being undertaken.
5. Successfully defend his/her work to an evaluation committee.