



UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS
PULASKI TECH

Assessment Report:
2018-2019

ENGL 2340 – Mythology



Course Lead: Jonathan Purkiss-Jones

Course-Level Learning Outcomes

1. What are the Course-Level Outcomes (CLOs)?

The course currently has four learning outcomes. The student will:

1. Understand significant literary and cultural developments in world civilizations.
2. Understand the interaction of various literary and cultural traditions.
3. Achieve familiarity with enduring expressions of human thought by studying world mythology, including the study of how they function in society and cultures.
4. Complete a significant analytical writing component.

2. Which CLOs were addressed for this academic year? (2018-2019)

All course learning outcomes are assessed in the course through various assignments. CLOs #1 and #2 are assessed through smaller writing assignments, and CLO #3 is assessed through unit tests. CLOs #2 and #4 are also assessed through a larger analytical paper assignment. For the past few years, we have measured and reported exclusively on CLO #4.

3. Which CLOs are being addressed in your assessment plan next academic year? (2019-2020)

All course learning outcomes will be addressed in 2019-2020 as outlined in the above response. However, we will be measuring and reporting on both CLOs #2 and #4 separately through the same assessment but from different areas of the new standard rubric.

4. Explain the assessment cycle.

All four outcomes are assessed each semester through smaller writing assignments, a larger final paper, and tests (as stated in the course standards). However, the previous three-year assessment plan focused primarily on the final paper for the course, which is associated with the last CLO. To align with changes being made in the other literature-based ENGL courses and help better measure another CLO (#2), a change is being made to the primary assessment method and its associate rubric to more clearly report data related to two important skills. CLO#1 and CLO#3 are being assessed through smaller writing assignments and tests, but no formal standard rubric, goals, or reporting are available yet. We will be discussing new assessment measures and tools in 2019-2020 for possible implementation in the future. The current primary assessment method of the final paper is at least planned to continue from the 2019-2020 academic year to the 2021-2022 academic year.

5. What are the assessment methods? Are they direct or indirect?

All CLOs are assessed using the following standards. These standards are communicated through syllabi templates and are the same for all ENGL 2340 courses.

Students will study a variety of myths from around the world with a focus on comparing myths from different cultures in order to determine shared types, themes, and traditions. Students will also learn about the development of myths, their purposes in societies, and the primary characters and character types. This class requires students to read and discuss primary and secondary sources critically, with an awareness of cultural and historical significance and contexts. Students will write a minimum of 10 pages total in analytical assignments that will be divided between a number of shorter writing assignments and at least one longer analytical research essay. Students will demonstrate good scholarship by using the conventions of MLA style and documentation. Midterm/final/unit tests will cover content of selected readings, general factual knowledge of history and culture for each period, and some interpretation of excerpts from the readings.

The final paper assessment has standard guidelines, which include the following:

Student will prepare a 4-6 page analytical research paper that articulates a clear thesis statement, uses supporting examples from primary and secondary sources to generate a critical, well-organized, clearly written interpretation of at least one myth through the use of those sources, and demonstrates a mastery of both MLA formatting, citation and documentation, and Standard American English in the construction of the piece.

6. What are the assessment goal(s)?

The threshold of success was 70% scoring adequate proficiency or higher in the Content and Development area of the standard rubric for the final paper.

7. What were the findings for this academic year? (2018-2019)

Out of 14 students assessed with the final paper in 2018-2019, 11 of them displayed adequate or higher proficiency in this skill area. This accounts for 79% of the students assessed.

8. What is your analysis of the findings?

About 79% of students assessed in 2018-2019 displayed at least adequate proficiency in interpreting at least one myth. This is an improvement from previous assessment data from Spring 2018 in which only 60% of students displayed similar proficiency levels. In addition to this, in Spring 2018, only 18% of students displayed superior proficiency in this skill area. In Spring 2019, that rate increased to 50%. This shows that changes made since Spring 2018 did have some beneficial effects on the students' display of interpretive skills. The course was only taught one semester (Spring 2019) and was only offered online, so there is no comparisons between semesters or modes of delivery available.

9. What is the action plan for the next academic year? (2019-2020) Explain.

One curricular change in Spring 2019, in particular, seems to have had the most beneficial effect on the display of critical-thinking skills on the final paper - the development of a new unit on the various approaches to interpreting myths early in the semester. Since the standard textbook has a deficiency in this area, this unit had to be created to supplement the textbook. Students were introduced to this new unit early in the spring semester. Then the students practiced those interpretive approaches week after week in short writing assignments, reinforcing those skills, that eventually led up to the final paper, where it was assessed. This change resulted in positive results, so it should be instituted in future classes.

The assessment plan will change in Fall 2019 to allow for a more precise assessment of two key skills - analytical skills (associated with CLO#4) and knowledge of cultural and literary context and connections (associated with CLO#2). Previously, the rubric measured the two skills together as one criterion (Content and Development). However, the rubric will change in the fall to allow the instructor to assess these two skills separately, allowing for a more accurate assessment of analytical skills as well as the assessment of another key skill. In response to this, the final paper assignment has been reworked for the course to focus on these two skills, and these two skills will be reinforced throughout the semester through smaller writing assignments and rubrics used to assess these assignments.

Originally, the CLOs were derived from the outcomes from the closely related courses in world literature. While the ACTS course outcomes may be appropriate for those courses, the outcomes for this classes need to be more distinctive and specific to this course and would help with determining the appropriate assessment method, measures, and tools needed to accurately gauge student skills, knowledge, and values. By Spring 2019, the course should redo the learning outcomes to be more specific. This may or may not result in changes to overall assessment for the course.