



Department of Language and Literature

Faculty Role in Secondary Education Assessment: Collection/Evaluation of Submissions

Drafted: Fall 2015

### **Rationale**

To ensure that SXU English language arts teacher candidates meet the standards for content knowledge set by the National Council of Teachers of English, it is desirable, if not imperative, that the faculty of the Department of Language and Literature participate in the assessment of candidates' academic work that speaks to the standards. Only with faculty input can the proper, holistic assessment of student work, and the Secondary Education Program as a whole, take place. However, it is also vital that faculty time, effort, and academic freedom should not be abused or taken for granted in this system of evaluation; indeed, this process must possess an integrity that is defined by respect for both the student participants and the faculty involved in the assessment.

### **Preliminary Moves**

In the first weeks of each term, the Director of the Secondary Education Program will meet with the newly-enrolled majors to discuss the analytical commentary essay requirement for the NCTE standards. The Director will provide the students a guided tour of the department website developed for the assessment system (<http://english.sxu.edu/assessment>), and he will walk them through the assignment sheets and rubrics, as well as the procedures for composition, submission, and evaluation, so that they know when to complete the commentary essays and what the department's faculty will do with the commentaries and artifacts after they have been received.

### **Secondary Education NCTE Assessment Committee**

Students who have any questions about the assessment process, the standards that form the content of their essays, or the drafting process will be able to speak directly with a member of the Secondary Education NCTE Assessment Committee (SENAC), which will be comprised of the Director of the Secondary Education Program, the Chair of the Language and Literature Department, and a faculty member nominated and elected by the department **[to serve a two-year term??]**. These individuals will be responsible for undertaking the advisement of the secondary education students in the assessment process, and they will work in conjunction with department faculty.

Please note: Instructors may meet individually with students to discuss the ways in which the NCTE standards could be applied to a specific assignment in the course; however, that advisement activity is purely voluntary. The bulk of the guidance that students will receive in the assessment process will be offered by SENAC.

### The Faculty Role in the NCTE Assessment Process

**1. Identify the possible NCTE standards that could be addressed in the course.** Instructors should include a brief blurb in their syllabi, directed toward the secondary education students, that indicates which NCTE standards would normally be considered to be addressed in the course (See the “Sample Syllabus Language” (for ENGL 201), attached). Instructors might want to suggest a specific assignment that could act as an artifact for the assessment process, but this element is not necessary.

**2. Evaluate the commentary assignment by the end of the term:** All that is required of instructors is a rubric assessment, which consists of four criteria to be evaluated on a scale of “Exceeds,” “Meets,” “Emerging,” and “Not Evident.” Faculty *are not responsible* for engaging in a lengthy response to the work.

[Please note: In an ideal adoption of the commentary assessment, the instructor may coach students in the wide range of rhetorical options available to writers of commentaries which may be appropriate for the projects to be completed in the course (i.e., the artifacts to be commented on). As well, the commentary itself may be added as a graded assignment in the course in its own right. Once again, this level of adoption, teaching, and assessment is *not* required.]

**3. Submission of the Rubric to the Secondary Education Director:** After the instructor has evaluated the embedded assignments for the secondary education majors in the course, she will return her assessment data to the Director of the English Secondary Education Program.

### Final Thoughts

The fundamental idea, of course, is to keep this process as simple and unobtrusive as possible for both the students and the faculty of the Department of Language and Literature, and so there are a few things to keep in mind:

- 1) In an effort to preserve the integrity of the process, students will normally be allowed to complete **only one analytical commentary essay** in a given class. In this way, they will be encouraged to participate in the assessment process throughout their entire undergraduate career, and not only in a given semester or a given course.
- 2) Students are responsible for notifying their instructors when they intend to complete an analytical essay for the NCATE assessment in a given course. It is not the responsibility of the individual instructor to ensure that their secondary education students meet the assessment requirement.
- 3) This process is meant to apply to secondary education students only. If the assessment procedures of this unit are successful, and the department decides to implement this brand of evaluation for all majors, then the process will be applied more extensively. For the first year or two of this assessment project, however, the focus group will be decidedly more limited.

## **Sample Syllabus Language for Commentary Assessment Project**

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**English 201-01: English Literature to 1700**  
**Fall Semester 2015**

**Instructor:** Dr. Shannon Ambrose

**Office:** N416 WAC

**Office Hours:** MWF 12:30-1:30 and 3:00-4:00 *meetings by appointment only*

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**\*Required Texts:**

*The Norton Anthology of English Literature: The Major Authors, 9<sup>th</sup> edition, volume 1*

**Course Description and Objectives:**

This course is designed to introduce students to important literary works from the beginnings of English literature to 1700. Each work will be considered in the context of its time, and an effort will be made to understand and appreciate literature written in a wide variety of historical contexts. For the duration of the semester, you will be expected to engage critically with literary texts and to think and write analytically about the ideas and observations that we cover in class. It is my hope that, by the end of the semester, you will be able to utilize the skills covered in this course to approach and respond to literature in an authoritative, analytical voice.

**Assignments:**

**Formal Essay:**

There will be one formal essay for this course, four pages in length. I shall discuss the essay as its due date approaches, but the following requirements will remain the same:

- Essays must be typed, proofread, and polished.
- Each paper should be double-spaced and clearly printed using a standard 11-12 point font and 1-inch margins on all sides.
- Your name, the name of the assignment, and the due date should appear in the upper right-hand corner of every submitted paper.
- There should only be a few empty lines between your title and the beginning of the text. Do not skip lines between paragraphs.

**A note to all English Secondary Education majors in this course: At the end of the term, you might consider using this formal essay assignment to write an academic commentary on one of the following English Education assessment topics: 1) Classic texts; 2) Historicity; 3) Genre; or 4) Language. If you are interested in composing an English Education assessment essay in this course on one of these topics, please make an appointment to speak with me or with Dr. Angelo Bonadonna, Director of the Secondary Education program [at [bonadonna@sxu.edu](mailto:bonadonna@sxu.edu)].**