English Major Goals and Associated Student Learning Outcomes

**Goal 1:** By the time they graduate, English majors should be able to read texts carefully and analytically, with an understanding and appreciation of the complexity of their verbal, rhetorical, and/or literary characteristics.

- a. summarize the contents of a text accurately
- b. make a claim about a text
- c. marshal evidence that supports that claim
- d. explain why/how that evidence supports that claim
- e. explain how literary and rhetorical elements and devices contribute to the text’s meaning and the reader’s experience
- f. select relevant passages worthy of extensive analysis

**Goal 2:** By the time they graduate, English majors should be able to communicate/create in multiple modes (writing, speech, visual/multimedia) appropriately adapted to the purpose at hand, and with an awareness of the needs of the imagined audience.

- a. deduce the audience and purpose implicit in an assignment
- b. identify the needs and expectations of the intended audience
- c. craft writing, speech, and/or visuals that fulfill the needs and meet the expectations of the intended audience
- d. explain ideas and facts drawn from sources in ways appropriate to the audience and purpose
- e. cite the ideas of others in ways appropriate to the audience and purpose

**Goal 3:** By the time they graduate, English majors should be able to carry out independent research: conceiving of questions to pursue, identifying and accounting for other relevant voices, and appropriately registering one’s engagements with those voices using the conventions of the discipline.

- a. compose research questions that meet the demands of the assignment or problem to be addressed
- b. locate and identify relevant and appropriate sources
- c. discriminate between reliable and unreliable sources
- d. paraphrase and quote relevant facts and ideas contained within a source
- e. cite sources ethically in a manner appropriate to the audience and genre
- f. explain how/why evidence drawn from sources advances one’s argument and addresses one’s research question
- g. counter opposing viewpoints
- h. justify one’s agreement or disagreement with the perspectives offered by sources
- i. synthesize the perspectives offered by multiple sources
- j. explain why one’s conclusions are significant

**Goal 4:** By the time they graduate, English majors should be conversant with a broad range of texts (representing, e.g., different forms, different genres, different social and cultural perspectives, and different historical periods) in order to recognize something of the great variety of artistic and rhetorical expression comprehended by the field of English Studies.

- a. identify the form and genre of a text
b. describe the characteristics of different literary movements (e.g., modernism, transcendentalism)
c. explain how one can tell that a particular text belongs to a particular movement
d. compare and contrast two texts representing different forms, genres, periods, or cultural perspectives

Goal 5: By the time they graduate, English majors should be able to recognize the ways that texts are situated in their cultural and historical settings—both shaped by and shaping the cultures and moments in which they were produced—in order to appreciate both the place of those texts in larger traditions and to appreciate the ways that the examination of those texts can open onto questions of broader historical and cultural import.

a. identify the historical and cultural context in which a text was produced
b. describe how a particular historical event, shift, or attitude is reflected in a text
c. offer evidence to demonstrate this connection
d. explain how a particular text influenced historical events or readers
e. compare and contrast texts produced in different cultures or at different historical moments
f. justify the importance of a particular text for understanding the period and culture in which it was produced
g. describe how a text reflects its author’s identity (e.g., race, class, sexuality, gender)

Goal 6: By the time they graduate, English majors should be acculturated to disciplinary modes of thinking and inquiry, while remaining reflexive about their influence. Students should understand the different kinds of questions that structure inquiry in the discipline and should be conversant with the kinds of critical vocabulary and theoretical frameworks that enable conversations in the discipline to proceed.

a. differentiate between various theoretical and methodological approaches
b. identify theoretical concepts or lenses relevant for the analysis or production of a particular text
c. explain the theory relevant to one’s analysis in one’s own words
d. apply the theory to specific details within the text being analyzed
e. justify the application of a particular theoretical or methodological approach to a particular text
f. critique the shortcomings of a particular theoretical or methodological approach