**Departmental Assessment Report**

**English**

**MFA (Creative Writing)**

**2015-16**

**1.What learning outcome(s) did you assess this year?**

For 2015-16, the Creative Writing committee applied scoring rubric to holistic reading of all 299 MFA Thesis projects.

**2. What instruments did you use to assess them?**

To assess the thesis projects and Objective 2.1, faculty evaluated final manuscripts based on a six-part rubric that's applied to a student's work when they enter the program vs. when they exit the program. Each of the 19 graduating students in 2015-16 were assessed by 6 different Creative Writing committee instructors (their thesis chairs) and rated either 4 or 5, on a scale of 1 to 5, in each of the categories.

**3. What did you discover from these data?**

The 299 Thesis projects are an effective measure of students developing the discipline and behaviors appropriate to a professional writer, specifically by enhancing their abilities to create a body of publishable poetry or prose. All students showed upward trajectory from start of the program to exit.

**4. What changes did you make as a result of the findings?**

None.

**5. What assessment activities will you be conducting in the 2016-17 academic year?**

In 2016-17, apply scoring rubric and holistic reading of essays, short stories, and poems published in Fresno State student critical and creative writing journals and/or presented at Department or University sponsored colloquia or conferences.

**6. What progress have you made on items from your last program review action plan?**

Our recent 5-year Review made 5 specific recommendations. None of them were directly linked to learning outcomes per se, but did speak to the conditions in which teaching and learning occurs.

*Consider Options for More Equitable Opportunity*: We are updating our web pages, and have begun using our email lists more extensively as well as expanding our social media presence so as to disseminate word about student leadership positions with the Levine Prize and *the Normal School* journal, as well as the efforts of the various student groups that organize many of the readings and craft workshops with visiting writers funded through IRA monies. We continue to work on transparency about how decisions are made, and are engaged in frank discussions about how to break through student perceptions of hierarchy and privilege.

*Support faculty travel*: An increase in the Department’s operating budget last year allowed a little more support for faculty scholarship. For the most part however, there is still much room for improvement (as the Review Panel noted) in the University’s support of faculty scholarship.

*Resources for recruiting students*: The recent approval and implementation of fee waivers for TAs will do something to help some of our students. And the Division of Graduate Studies has been generous in its granting of GAships for talented incoming students. We are also working with Development and Outreach offices to raise more money for our scholarship programs. Being able to offer sufficient financial support for talented students—particularly those recruited from beyond California—remains an issue, however. We have applied, and will continue to apply, for recruitment mini-grants to aid us in reaching not only out-of-state but local prospects.