

**Literatures in English Graduate Program**  
**Ph.D. Learning Goals and Assessment**  
**Adopted February 2011**

**Learning Goal 1: The attainment of scholarly, research, and teaching skills in a broad field of learning in addition to a specialized sub-field.**

Assessment of student achievement of Goal 1:

- Grades and written evaluations in graduate courses
- Teaching evaluations completed by undergraduates; written evaluations completed by faculty mentors in lecture courses
- Qualifying exams assessing depth and breadth of knowledge
- Written evaluations at the end of qualifying exams and after dissertation defenses
- Placement in positions and careers that require these skills

Role of the program in helping students to achieve Goal 1:

- Close advising by mentors in subfields to make sure that students are being prepared in a coherent and academically rigorous fashion
- Orientation workshops to introduce students to the teaching of writing at the undergraduate level
- Effective monitoring of student progress at every stage
  - Semi-annual review of students in coursework and annual review of dissertation students conducted by Student Review Committee made up of graduate faculty in the program; evaluations also reviewed by advisors; mentoring by advisors and by director/associate director
  - Annual reports generated by dissertation students
- Evaluations of teaching effectiveness of instructors in graduate courses
  - If effectiveness is below expectations, work with instructors to improve effectiveness
- Standing committee to assess and select curriculum; and to assess effectiveness of the program
  - If there are problems, policies are revised at the level both of coursework and dissertation work
- The department has a placement director and a placement committee, which is responsible for assisting students to find employment and for consulting with the department on how to align program requirements with job market preparation.

**Learning Goal 2: The ability to conduct and produce original research.**

Assessment of student achievement of Goal 2:

- Preparation of dissertation proposal
- Preparation of first chapter or substantial section of writing at the start of work on the dissertation
- Assessment of quality of Ph.D. dissertation
  - Defense of dissertation

- Critical reading of dissertation by committee of graduate faculty members and a committee member from outside of the Literatures in English program.
- Submission and acceptance of peer-reviewed articles and conference papers based on the dissertation
- Submission and acceptance of peer-reviewed articles and conference papers based on work in student's subfield but not part of the dissertation
- Achievement of students as evidenced by professional placements, selection for conference presentations, peer-reviewed publications, and competitive grant and fellowship selection

Role of the program in helping students achieve Goal 2:

- Provide early introduction to research methods and opportunities for research within graduate coursework
- Provide workshops led by the Associate Graduate Director that introduce students to Grant and Fellowship Application; How to Apply to Conferences; How to Publish; and How to Write a Dissertation Proposal
  - Standing committee of faculty reviews these workshops periodically and makes recommendations for changes
- Provide several opportunities per year for graduate students to present their work publicly. The Graduate Symposium, held each April, is a one-day conference for Rutgers English graduate students. Other graduate student conferences are sponsored on a more periodic basis.
- Provide two semester-long seminars designed to help students publish their first peer-reviewed article and complete their first dissertation chapter: How to Publish (spring); and Dissertation Writing (Fall).
- Provide annual awards for best paper written for a graduate seminar, best published paper, best dissertation, etc.
- Provide excellent funding throughout the graduate career for dissertation writing, completion, and archival research. This includes year-long fellowships as well as summer grants.
- Provide advising at every stage of the program, both from field experts and from director/associate director. Director and associate director assist in the identification of mentors.

**Learning Goal 3: The acquisition of professional skills commensurate with the capacity to secure employment in disciplines of literary and cultural studies.**

Assessment of student achievement of Goal 3:

- Review evidence of papers presented and publications during annual review of dissertation students; evidence reviewed by dissertation directors and Student Review Committee
- Evaluations of teaching effectiveness of graduate student instructors
- Collection of placement data
- Review of exit surveys provided to the department by the Graduate School

Role of the program in helping students achieve Goal 3:

- Provide annual reports from the dissertation director and from Student Review Committee of graduate faculty that helps students gauge their progress towards professional development
- Provide workshops early in graduate program to introduce students to the conferences in their fields; to methods of application for those conferences; and to publication. These workshops include the How to Apply to Conferences and How to Publish mentioned above.
- Provide an introduction to professionalization in the first year of graduate study through the First Year Discussion Group, which meets 3-4 times each semester; led by graduate director
- Provide opportunities for graduate students to develop teaching skills at all levels of the undergraduate curriculum: writing instruction; introductory lectures; and upper-level “stand alone” courses taught by advanced graduate students.
- Host periodic discussions of pedagogy
- Provide workshops to help student develop skills for applying for intra- as well as extra-mural grants, dissertation completion fellowships, and postdoctoral fellowships.
- Provide placement program, including periodic workshops, review of placement materials, and individual advising about jobs in subfields
- Provide occasions for current students to meet with successful former students who have recently secured tenure and book publication. Those occasions include the annual Alumni Lecture visit, which involves both lecture and professionalization workshop, and periodic visits from other alumni in various subfields

The leadership of the Literatures in English graduate program, along with a standing committee of graduate faculty in the program, regularly reviews the structure and content of the program and the feedback received from assessments and surveys. These reviews are used to provide the best possible education for students in the fields of literary and cultural studies.