

Creative Writing			
EN300 Advanced Creative Writing	•	•	
EN301 Advanced Writing	•	•	
EN382 Advanced Publishing Projects			•
EN410 Senior Writing Portfolio			•
EN480 Professional Writing Internship			•

Table 4:

Computer Aided Publishing			
EN301 Advanced Writing	•	•	
EN382 Advanced Publishing Projects			•
EN410 Senior Writing Portfolio			•
EN480 Professional Writing Internship			•

All writing majors complete the English major traditions core for historical breadth of the role of writing and literature in society over time.

The student paper, the *Decaturian*, is an on-going living classroom in which students blend theoretical lessons with practical experience. Creative Writing students often participate as editors for *Collage*, the student literary magazine as well as other student anthologies and events. Professional writing students often serve as editors and designers for *Collage* and Bronze Man Books.

These advanced opportunities for integrating theory and practice prepare our writing majors for a variety of professional opportunities in the future. Employing their advanced writing, editing, and publishing skills in the service of others, writing majors often complete professional writing Internships in the community for a wide range of business and non-profit organizations.

In the spring of the junior year, all writing majors come together to take the course, Applied Writing Theory. This course on contemporary writing theories (again both Rhetoric and Poetic) prepares students to develop a rich theoretical understanding of writing in the current society. Students in Applied Writing Theory study one of the major applications of writing theory, the teaching of writing. They also apply writing theories to a research project, studying writing as the subject of original research. This advanced theory and practice course is a gateway course for graduate studies in writing and prepares students to discuss their own writing abilities in future job interviews.

The final chapter of the writing major learning story is that all writing majors complete a senior writing portfolio in the fall semester their senior year. Each portfolio is a custom creation, demonstrating the student's ability to write, edit, and design a collection of their best work. The portfolios provide a means of demonstrating the range of professional abilities, and it becomes a place for reflection on the student's abilities and future goals.

In Fall 2011, four students enrolled in EN410 Senior Writing Portfolio. Three students completed the course. With four students enrolled, the decision was made to treat the course as an independent study rather than a single course. The four students were assigned to three faculty in the area of each student's writing concentration. Of the three faculty, two taught the course for the first time with short notice. Consequently, the EN410 course for 2011 did not have students of multiple genres/concentrations in the same classroom and they did not have a common, shared experience in the course.

In May/June 2012, the English Department Chair reviewed the Senior Writing Portfolios evaluating the quality of learning demonstrated for each learning goal, using the portfolio review rubric.

- Portfolio Artifact 1: personal writing theory or statement of poetics
 - Portfolio Artifact 2: sample of writing theory research
 - Portfolio Artifact 3: annotations of writing samples and/or publication designs
 - Concentration Portfolio Artifacts: writing samples and/or publication designs in area of concentration
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2011-12: In Fall 2011, four students were enrolled in EN410 Senior Writing Portfolio. Three students completed the course. The lone journalism major has not submitted the Senior Writing Portfolio for assessment review.

In the following tables, the number of students rated in each level of performance are reported, along with a "total" composite score for all students. This total score indicates the level of performance of this graduating class.

Table 6: (n=3)

personal writing theory or statement of poetics (<i>synthesizes classical & contemporary theories</i>)	1 0%	1 %	%		

<i>cultural audience expectations)</i>				
annotated publication design samples (<i>shows understanding of technical user knowledge, design rhetorical effectiveness, project management and tutoring knowledge</i>)	NA	NA	NA	NA

Table 10:







personal writing theory or statement of poetics (<i>synthesizes classical & contemporary theories</i>)	1.75	
writing theory research (<i>grounded in methods & issues of contemporary writing theory research</i>)	1.2	
annotations of writing samples (<i>reveals richness of rhetorical strategies of near-professional performance</i>)	1.4	

Table 11:

Learning Goals Portfolio Ratings

annotated writing samples (<i>awareness of methods and forms of genres successfully implemented in samples</i>)	1.5	
introductions, essays, annotations on writer's own goals and connections to traditions (<i>contextualize self in contemporary traditions</i>)	1.25	
publishable or near professional texts (<i>engaging texts in variety of genres with lasting impression on reader</i>)	1.92	

For academic year 2011-2012, three graduating seniors completed a writing portfolio in the senior capstone course, English 410. Only two portfolios were submitted for assessment review. The portfolios were reviewed by the English Department Chair using the rubrics for evaluation of each artifact.

Overall, student performance was rated in the borderline GREEN/YELLOW range, with composite scores of 2.5 for Artifact 1 (a personal writing theory or statement of poetics), 2.5 for Artifact 2 (writing theory research), and 2 for Artifact 3 (annotations of writing samples). Such outcomes are cause for celebration—students are learning and faculty are delivering valuable instruction.

The portfolios submitted in 2011-2012 did not afford a large sample for making larger observations about the major or the program. As in years past (2009-2010, for example), annotations and reflection proved to be the weakest area of achievement. The low score in this area results, in part, from a thin portfolio from one of the students, a portfolio that seemed to conflate annotation and professional documents and lacked process work that could provide reflection. The small sample for 2011-2012 was one of highly capable students. The mid-level (YELLOW) rating for most of one student's portfolio results primarily from a thin, undocumented submission.

: Maintain the 410 Senior Writing Portfolio course as a single class with one instructor. Independent study can provide students with particular, individualized attention to their own learning, their own writing, and their own developing sense of themselves as writers. Nevertheless, having three different professors providing instruction and perhaps tailoring the course to meet individual student's needs makes assessment difficult.

The biggest concern about conducting the class as independent studies is the lost opportunity of students learning together. Students learn from each other—bringing senior writing majors together for one last professionalizing portfolio course allows students from different writing concentrations to work through the same challenging questions with each other.

: Continue to emphasize reflective artifacts that illustrate student awareness of their own work and process. All writing majors need to demonstrate an understanding of the importance of being able to discuss and reflect on their own work in a professional manner. Portfolios submitted for 2011-2012 demonstrate a facility of talking about work in the context of traditions and the student's own aesthetic.

The artifacts that demonstrate that ability vary widely. One student, for example, annotated each writing sample, talking about his impressions of the work now, in retrospect, and putting it in the context of the very large body of work submitted. Another student embedded those reflections in professional documents (letters of submission and an artist statement).

2) As new writing faculty join the department, an exchange of ideas seems possible and welcome. The department is committed to assisting new faculty grow into their roles as they shift into the touchstone courses (290, 241, 310, 410).

3) The Writing Committee would like to initiate discussions and explore further development of the professional writing concentration, both in terms of courses offered in the concentration as well as assessment methods in place for measuring student engagement in the concentration. Specifically, additional artifacts could be targeted and collected by students pursuing a concentration in professional writing. New faculty and informed advising could help revitalize the Professional Writing concentration.

The annual report will be shared with the Writing Major Faculty Committee and the English department faculty in order for them to discuss and implement ways to improve the quality of student learning experiences in the writing major. Discussion and development of improvement plans and initiative will take place in a fall English departmental meeting focused on the 2011-2012 academic year assessment results.

Appendix 2: Creative Writing Concentration Learning Goals Portfolio Evaluation Rubric

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annotated
writing samples

Appendix 3: Journalism Concentration Learning Goals Portfolio Evaluation Rubric

<p>annotated news stories</p> <p>Related goals: JW1 & JW2</p>	<p>Senior writing portfolio includes a rich variety of news stories with critical annotations discussing the writer's evaluation of sources, story format and journalistic techniques.</p>	<p>Senior writing portfolio includes a variety of news stories with some discussion of the writer's critical thinking and understanding of journalistic story formats and techniques employed.</p>	<p>Senior writing portfolio lacks a variety of news stories and includes only superficial levels of discussion of the writer's evaluation of information formats and techniques.</p>
<p>editing skills sample</p> <p>Related goals: JW3</p>	<p>Senior writing portfolio includes a sample of effective revision and editing of the student's own writing or editing of other's stories showing mastery of AP Style.</p>	<p>Senior writing portfolio includes a sample of editing of the student's own writing, with little more than low-level edits evident. Student work demonstrates some understanding of AP style.</p>	<p>Senior writing portfolio lacks a sample of editing skills or demonstrates low quality editing throughout the portfolio due to typos, errors or evident lack of AP style.</p>
<p>research on role of media in society</p> <p>Related goals: JW4</p>	<p>Senior writing portfolio includes a sample of high quality research on the role of a free press in society.</p>	<p>Senior writing portfolio includes research on media but does not reach insights about the role of a free press in society.</p>	<p>Senior writing portfolio lacks research on media or demonstrates a lack of understanding of multiple perspectives on the role of a free press in society.</p>

Appendix 4: Professional Writing Concentration Learning Goals Portfolio Evaluation Rubric

<p>annotated writing samples</p> <p>Related goals: PW1 & PW2</p>	<p>Senior writing portfolio includes a rich variety of writing samples with critical annotations discussing the writer's knowledge of conventions and ethical, legal and cultural implications of audience expectations.</p>	<p>Senior writing portfolio includes a variety of writing samples with some discussion of the writer's critical thinking and understanding of professional conventions and audience expectations.</p>	<p>Senior writing portfolio lacks a variety of writing samples. Samples and annotations suggest a lack of knowledge of professional writing conventions and audience expectations.</p>
<p>annotated publication design samples</p> <p>Related goals: PW3</p>	<p>Senior writing portfolio includes a rich variety of professional publication designs. Annotations reveal an understanding and creative application of (1) user knowledge of computer technology for editing and publishing, (2) design knowledge based on the rhetorical goals of the design, (3) project management knowledge, and (4) an overall ability to teach others to understand professional publishing.</p>	<p>Senior writing portfolio includes a variety of professional publication designs. Annotations reveal an some understanding and reasonable application of (1) user knowledge of computer technology for editing and publishing, (2) design knowledge based on the rhetorical goals of the design, (3) project management knowledge, and (4) an overall ability to teach others to understand professional publishing.</p>	<p>Senior writing portfolio includes a limited variety of professional publication designs. Annotations reveal a lack of understanding and limited strategies for editing and publishing techniques. Poor quality publication samples will be evident, with a lack of deliberate choices of emphasis, limited typographical control, and excessive reliance on templates.</p>

Appendix 5:

Student Name:

Writing Concentration (circle one): creative writing journalism professional writing

personal writing theory or statement of poetics <i>(synthesizes classical & contemporary theories)</i>			
writing theory research <i>(grounded in methods & issues of contemporary writing theory research)</i>			
annotations of writing samples <i>(reveals richness of rhetorical strategies of near-professional performance in concentration)</i>			

Learning Goals Portfolio Evaluation Rubric

annotated writing samples <i>(awareness of methods and forms of genres successfully implemented in samples)</i>			
introductions, essays, annotations on writer's own goals and connections to traditions <i>(contextualize self in contemporary traditions)</i>			
publishable or near professional texts <i>(engaging texts in variety of genres with lasting engagement or impression on reader)</i>			

Learning Goals Portfolio Evaluation Rubric

annotated news stories <i>(variety of news stories demonstrate use of story format, sources and journalism techniques)</i>			
editing skills sample <i>(demonstrates effective revision and editing of own or other's stories in AP style)</i>			
research on role of media in society <i>(research on role of free press in society)</i>			

Learning Goals Portfolio Evaluation Rubric

annotated writing samples <i>(variety shows knowledge of conventions, ethical and legal and cultural audience expectations)</i>			
annotated publication design samples <i>(shows understanding of technical user knowledge, design rhetorical effectiveness, project rhetorical analysis)</i>			