

**Assessment #2 Content Knowledge in English
Grades in Required English Courses and Methods Assignments**

1. Assessment Description

This assessment of content knowledge is based on 1) grades in certain required content courses in the major and 2) grades on specific Methods assignments. Taken together, these required aspects of our program provide candidates with the content knowledge required by NCTE standards. As shown in Table 2-1 below, candidates in our program are required to take courses that cover most of the content knowledge specified in **NCTE Standards 3.1-3.7**. Those not covered in courses are met through specific Methods assignments (see Table 2-2).

2. Alignment of Assessments with NCTE Standards

Table 2-1 Required English Courses and Alignment with NCTE Standards

Courses that Meet Requirements	NCTE Standards
British Literature (two courses required, one pre-1789). Course offerings include: ENG 220 Readings in English Lit 321 Beginnings to 18th Century 322 18th Century to Present 323 Medieval 324 Chaucer 326/7 Shakespeare 328 Milton 329 19th Century 330 Studies in British Literature	Standard 3.5.1
American Literature (two courses required). Course offerings include: ENG 210 Intro to American Studies 240 Readings in American Lit 341 Early American Lit 342 19th Century American Lit 343 20th Century American Lit 344 Studies in American Lit 346 Transcendentalism	Standard 3.5.1
Multicultural/Continental/World (two courses required). Course offerings include: ENG 247 American Indian Studies 250 Continental Lit 252 Lit of the Holocaust 260 Readings in World Lit 261 Classical Lit 345 Black American Lit	Standard 3.5.1

347 Modern American Indian Lit 350 Studies in Continental Lit 360 Studies in World Lit 370 Studies in Lit of the Americas	
ENG 209 Literary Analysis Designed primarily and required for those intending to major in English, this course concentrates on writing critical essays and analyzing types of narrative, poetry, drama, and experimental texts. Serves to introduce students to literary themes. Note: All instructors include all genres, female authors, and writers of color.	Standard 3.6.3 Standard 3.5.2 Standard 3.3
Writing course (one beyond ENG 101). Course offerings include: ENG 202 Expository Writing 203 Women’s Writing 204 Creative Writing 208 Topics in Writing 301 Fiction Workshop 302 Poetry Workshop 303 Nonfiction Workshop 304 Writing for Teachers 308 Advanced Topics in Writing	Standards 3.4 and 3.2.2
ENG 312 Descriptive Grammar Examination of English grammar and theory, including traditional, transformational-generative, and case grammar. Collateral readings will focus on applied linguistics and American dialects. Students develop skills for teaching grammar through written/oral exercises. Required for secondary English teacher certification.	Standard 3.1 and 4.4
ENG 410 Theory Intensive study of a particular school or schools of theory. Topics may focus on poetics, genre study, rhetorical theory, or literary criticism.	Standard 3.5.4

Table 2.2 Specific Methods Assignments and Alignment with NCTE Standards

Assignment Description: Methods	NCTE Standards
ESEC 385	
Lesson plan to teach students about media in relation to culture.	Standard 3.6 and 4.6
Adolescent Literature: Reading Response to describe preparation and planning for teaching an adolescent novel.	Standard 3.5.3
Critique of adolescent novel of choice shared with Methods class	Standard 3.5.3

3. Data Findings

Candidates overall clearly do well in their required courses. In all categories, save one, their grades are over 3.0. It is particularly impressive that their highest grades are in what

the department considers the most difficult course—theory. Somewhat disturbing are the lower grades in the grammar course. The course is very difficult, and some candidates struggle with the memorization work and objective tests.

Candidates also did very well on their Methods assignments for media and adolescent literature. One candidate did not do well on the media assignment, frankly, because her life was a little chaotic at that moment; her house was one of the casualties of the New Hampshire floods that fall, and her work temporarily suffered. In terms of the adolescent literature assignments, candidates all did as well as would be expected for their first time imagining how they were going to teach an entire novel. For the second assignment, the fact that their critiques will be copied and distributed to all their classmates provides greater incentive to produce accurate and helpful information about the novel they have chosen.

4. Evidence for Meeting Standards:

NCTE content knowledge standards are definitely integrated into the structure of the English Education Program. Candidates must study a wide variety of literature across time periods, geographic areas, authors, and genres (**Standards 3.5.1-2**). They also must study theory (**Standard 3.5.4**). The required writing courses (**Standards 3.4 and 3.2.2**) and the grammar course, which also deals with dialects and language in relation to culture and race (**Standard 3.1 and 4.4**), are requirements only for English majors pursuing secondary English teacher certification. ENG 209, the introduction to the major, is designed to ensure that candidates will be introduced to methods for reading texts (**Standard 3.3**), including all the major genres (**Standard 3.5.2**), non-traditional forms of “text” (**Standard 3.6.3**), female authors, and works by authors of color (**Standard 3.5.2**). Since candidates must take and pass all of these courses, these standards are met through our curriculum.

The two content standards that are not covered in the major (**Standard 3.5.3** adolescent literature) and media (**Standard 3.6 and 4.6**) are both covered by specific assignments in Methods. As can be seen in the charts below, candidates did very well on these assignments. Since the media assignment demands that they discuss media in the context of culture, it meets **Standard 3.6.1** most specifically. The adolescent novel critique assignment means that candidates are exposed to many more adolescent novels than just the three they read in Methods, thus meeting the call for “numerous works” in **Standard 3.5.3**.

5. Assessment Documentation

5a. Assessment tool

Content Knowledge is being assessed through grades in courses required for the English major (see Sections 1 above). Content Knowledge not covered through course requirements is met through three specific assignments from ESEC 385 Methods (see Notes 1 and 2 below for assignment descriptions).

5b. Scoring guide

(1) Course Grades

There are no explicit standards for grading in the English Department or the College. The grades are taken from student transcripts.

(2) Rubric for Media Assignment

	4	3	2	1
Aspect of Media	Plan clearly focuses on one aspect of media	Focus of plan evident but not clear	Focus unclear or more than one aspect covered	Role of media in plan unclear
Creating Readers of Media	Plan clearly helps students learn how to be critical consumers/readers of media messages	Plan includes some aspects of becoming critical readers	Plan may help students but is not inherently part of the lesson	Relation of plan to developing critical readers is not clear
Increasing Understanding of Media's Influence	Connection between media and culture is clear and carefully integrated into the lesson	Connection between media and culture is made	Connection is unclear	No connection made

(3) Grading Scale for Adolescent Literature Assignment: Planning

4 = Both planning process and experience with adolescent literature explained thoroughly
3 = Only one is explained or explanation is not thorough
2 = Distinction between student and teacher preparation is not clear and/or experience with adolescent literature is not explained
1 = Response is superficial and incomplete

(4) Grading Scale for Adolescent Literature Assignment: Critique

4 = title, author, plot are covered, and relation to readers is explained
3 = title and author are listed; plot is covered although some points may be missing; relation to readers could be more thorough
2 = some information is missing, plot is not fully covered, and/or understanding of adolescent readers is not clear
1 = basic information and understanding of readers is missing

5c. Data

(1) Grades in Courses that Fulfill Standards

Candidates are required to have an overall 2.5 grade point average in English at the time they are admitted to the Teacher Education Program and before they student teach.

Number of Candidates: 8 (Data set consists of those candidates currently enrolled in the program who had completed all requirements for graduation by May 2006)

	GPA Range							Transfer Credit (no grade)	Average for Group
	4.0-3.6	3.5-3.1	3.0-2.4	2.5-2.1	2.0-1.4	1.5-1.1	1.0-.0		
Required Literature Courses* (Standard 3.5.1-2)	1	3	4						3.02
ENG 209 (Standard 3.6.3, 3.5.2, 3.3)	1	1	3	1	1			1	3.00
Writing Course (Standard 3.4, 3.2.2)	1	2	4		1				3.12
Grammar Course (Standard 3.1, 4.4)		1	2	2	3				2.56
Theory Course (Standard 3.5.4)	1	1	3	1				2	3.16

*Grade range based on the average of all grades received in literature courses filling requirements.

(2) Grades in Methods Assignments that Fulfill Standards (N=8)

Media Assignment

Standard 3.6	4.0-3.6	3.5-3.1	3.0-2.6	2.5-2.1	2.0-1.6	1.5-1.0
Aspect of Media	4		3			1
Creating Readers of Media	4		3			1
Increasing	4		3			1

Understanding of Media's Influence								
------------------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Adolescent Literature Assignment: Planning

	4	3.5	3	2.5	2	1.5	1	0	
(Standard 3.5.3)	7		1						4.87

Adolescent Literature Assignment: Critique

	4	3.5	3	2.5	2	1.5	1	0	
(Standard 3.5.3)	7		1						4.87

Note 1

Reading Response Assignment #8: Media/Lesson Plan

Please read Chapter 10 and make a list of all the issues around using media that Christenbury discusses. Select the one that had not occurred to you or that you have given the least amount of thought to and explain how this issue might impact your teaching.

The most important goal in using any kind of media is that you use it to promote oral, visual, and technological literacy in your students. They should understand how to read and critique non-print texts as well as they do printed texts. They should understand media's influence on our culture, whether that influence comes from film, video, the visual arts, music, or computers. They should also understand how the influence of media affects their own learning positively and negatively. I would like you to design a lesson plan that will

- 1) focus on one aspect of media,
- 2) help students become better critical "readers" of media, and
- 3) help students understand the influence of media on them and the culture.

What kind of media you choose is up to you. Just make sure you are developing students' critical thinking skills around media (non-print texts) in this lesson. You are not writing a formal lesson plan this time. I just want you to explain what you will do and how it will accomplish these three goals. You may build on a lesson plan you have already written, and may, of course, use any of the ideas on the handouts or in the texts.

Note 2

Assignment Young Adult Literature: Planning

Please read *A Door Near Here*. Once again, you need to read this assignment **as a teacher**. You need to come to class with the materials (lists, charts, plans) that you think you would actually make for yourself if you were going to teach this novel. This means you need to know the main events, characters, settings, symbols. Your book should be filled with marginal or post-it notes so that you can quickly find all the key scenes and speeches you will want to discuss with your students. When do we actually find out what is happening to these children—what chapter is that in and what page is that on? What has just happened before this scene and what happens next? How old are these characters and what motivates their behavior? Where are the passages that prove this? What themes, ideas, and images will you want students to see in the book and where are these shown? How will you help them to appreciate and understand this novel better than they would on their own? Think about which of your students might find this novel very

hard to read. How will you help them? Come to class with your text and your notes ready to talk about your teaching ideas.

For your written response, I want you to write about the planning and preparation process you are using as a teacher vs. the one you used as a student. How are they different? What are you marking, why, and how? What additional considerations are there for you as a teacher? What were you concerned about as you read in terms of what you would have to cover as a teacher? Did pre-, during, and post-reading activities occur to you as you read?

Second, tell me about your experience with adolescent literature. Have you read much of it? Was it taught in your middle or high school? Do you have any knowledge of this genre? What are you learning about the genre from reading it now?

Adolescent Book Critique Assignment

Read a book—a good adolescent novel selected from the attached list. Choose one that you have never read or that you haven't read since middle or high school. On a separate sheet of paper, prepare a one-page (no more, no less) explanation that includes the 1) book's title, 2) the author, and 3) the basic plot. Make sure you are thorough in covering the plot, including how it ends. Then, explain what kinds of students you think this book would appeal to, which ones might be helped by reading it, or which ones might be encouraged to read because of this book. I will copy these for everyone in the class.