

## **ECLS Assessment Plan Spring 2008**

**A. INTRODUCTION:** The ECLS Department considers and revises its assessment strategies on a regular basis: large goals and specific student learning outcomes are revisited and re-interpreted in departmental discussions every year, and curricular modifications are regularly proposed and enacted in response to these discussions. Thus the "Assessment Plan" that follows is in effect a snapshot of a dynamic process, already outdated in some areas, incomplete in others.

### **B. MISSION:**

**The ECLS department engages students in the close critical study of literary works and other texts in their cultural and historical contexts. Students will read texts from British, American and World Literary traditions, including those of classical Greece and Rome, studying both well-known writers and voices excluded from literary canons.**

### **C: GOALS AND OUTCOMES:**

**GOAL I (Basic Disciplinary Skills):** Students will possess sophisticated skills in reading, writing, research and self-critical analytical thinking, and oral communication.

**Outcome 1:** Students know and successfully use the formal elements and accepted disciplinary practices of literary analysis (MLA format, citation requirements, research strategies).

**Outcome 2:** Students produce clear argumentative essays with a strong thesis, use of textual evidence, awareness of contradictions, and thoughtful conclusions; they will be able to base their work on scholarly research with primary and secondary texts.

**Outcome 3:** Students have the capacity to present such work in oral form.

**GOAL II (Basic Disciplinary Content):** Students will become knowledgeable about literature, literary history and literary theory.

**Outcome 1:** Students are able to identify specific historical perspectives constituent of works of literature from at least four chronologically defined periods of literary history.

**Outcome 2:** Students know a range of critical approaches that enable complex and situated readings of literary texts and historical events. They can identify, describe, and successfully deploy a particular version of critical approach in their own work.

**Outcome 3:** Students combine rigorous formal analysis with attention to the text's literary, cultural and political contexts, both at the time of its production and at the current historical moment.

**GOAL III (Critical/Historical Awareness):** Students will have an understanding of the complex relationships of representation to historical issues of power in relation to categories such as race, class, gender and sexuality.



## E. IMPLEMENTATION:

We present here a five-year plan beginning with 2007-08. Most of these assessment activities will take place every year in one form or another; the assessment "topic" for each year represents an area that the department intends to make the particular and intensive focus of its efforts. The program's key assessment points are in the junior seminar (where assessment is generally carried out by individual instructors using departmental rubrics) and in the comprehensive presentation, where subcommittees of faculty attend and read each student's oral and written presentations.

### Year 1: 2007-08 (Goal 1, Juniors; Goal 4, graduates)

**(Junior Writing Skills): Goal 1, Outcomes 1 and 2:** Assessed in Junior Seminar (ECLS 390) using instructors' rubric (attached to this plan).

**(Life Skills): Goal 4, Outcome 1:** Graduating seniors to be assessed, using a survey to be designed.

### Year 2: 2008-09 (Goal 1, Seniors)

**(Culminating Writing and Presentational Skills): Goal 1, Outcomes 1, 2, and 3:** Assessed in Comprehensive Presentations by subcommittees of faculty, using rubrics to be developed. Results will be compared to those for juniors in year 1.

### Year 3: 2009-10 (Goal 2, Juniors and Seniors)

**(Historical Awareness): Goal 2, Outcomes 1 and 3:** Assessed (a) in historical range of research topics developed for comps and (b) in qualitative faculty assessment of historicity of comps presentation discussions; rubric to be developed.

**(Theoretical Sophistication): Goal 2, Outcome 2:** Preliminary assessment in ECLS 390 by individual instructors, culminating assessment in comps presentations by faculty subcommittees; rubrics to be developed.

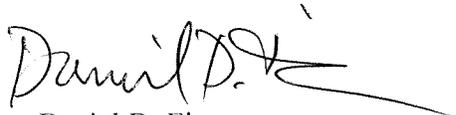
### Year 4: 2010-11 (Goal 3, Juniors and Seniors)

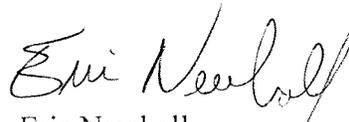
**(Critical Self-Awareness): Goal 3, Outcomes 1 and 2:** Preliminary assessment in ECLS 390 by individual instructors; culminating assessment in comps presentations by faculty subcommittees; rubrics to be developed.

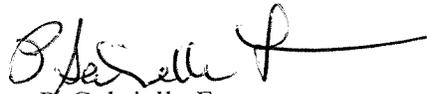
### Year 5: 2011-12 (Goal 4, Alumni)

**(Life Skills): Goal 4, Outcome 1:** Recent alumni to be assessed using a survey to be designed.

We, the undersigned members of the ECLS Department, have participated in the formulation of the Department's Assessment Plan and will participate in its implementation.

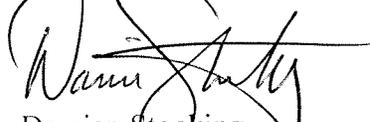
  
Daniel D. Fineman

  
Eric Newhall

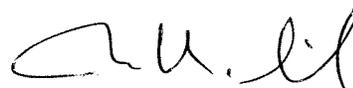
  
P. Gabrielle Foreman

  
Martha Ronk

Warren Montag

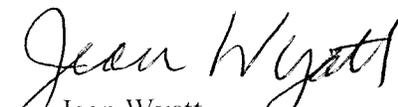
  
Damian Stocking

  
Michael Near

  
John Swift

  
Leila Neti

  
Raul Villa

  
Jean Wyatt

January 31, 2008

## **ECLS Junior Writing Requirement Standards Fall 2007**

To meet Occidental's junior writing requirement in ECLS, a student's writing skills must be judged Satisfactory in the following five areas.

1. **Mechanical Proficiency:** Errors of grammar or punctuation shall be minor and unobtrusive in the finished work submitted by the student.

2. **Organization and analysis:**

The student shall be able to formulate a well-defined topic and question regarding literature and/or literary history or theory.

The student shall be able to construct a coherent, consistent argument with a clearly conceived and articulated thesis and appropriate presentation and discussion of supporting evidence. Relations between specific observations and generalizations shall be clear to the reader.

The student shall be able to integrate evidence in the form of quoted materials from primary and secondary sources.

3. **Voice:** The student shall employ language appropriate to the complexity of his or her subject matter, balancing reader accessibility with conceptual sophistication.

4. **Conventions:** The student shall be familiar with and use with few errors the general conventions of the Modern Language Association for the preparation of literary analyses, including conventions of citation.

5. **Research:**

The student shall be familiar with and use a variety of research and bibliographic tools, from search engines to specific historical and critical databases and bibliographies.

The student shall know how to identify and acquire primary and secondary research materials through the Oasys catalogue, through Link+, through document delivery services, and online (through sources like JSTOR and Project Muse).

The student shall be able to use materials acquired through research as effective evidential support in a critical argument.

Assessment will usually be done by the Junior Seminar (ECLS 390) instructor based on the student's written work in that class. In some cases (such as when a student cannot take ECLS 390 because of study abroad), students may petition the department for permission to submit a portfolio of papers written in other courses.