

Notes on Senior English Assessment

All Senior English Majors must undergo three kinds of assessment in order to graduate:

1. **Assessment by the Department:** The Senior Exit Assessment is scheduled for the spring of senior year. All majors, except those in Professional Writing and Rhetoric, are interviewed by faculty. Professional Writing and Rhetoric majors have a slightly different assessment procedure that is completed in the Senior Seminar.
2. **Assessment by some external agency, according to concentration:**
 - a. English Education: PRAXIS test, usually in the spring of senior year (consult with Dr. Warman or the Education Department about cut-off scores)
 - b. Literature: ETS test in fall of senior year (minimum score of 130 required or student must take an additional literature survey course in the spring)
 - c. Professional Writing & Creative Writing: portfolios of work are submitted to reviewers from other colleges/universities in fall, generally, of senior year.

3. Appropriate Section(s) of Senior Seminar

Any questions about senior assessment should be directed to the Chair, Dr. Kevin Boyle.

Core and concentration questions must be answered orally. Answers will be marked from 1-5, with 5 being the highest mark. Students must make a 3, 4, or 5 on all of the concentration questions and may have no more than one 1 or 2 score on the core questions. If these goals are not achieved, the student must retake the oral part of the interview. Students are NOT allowed to bring in notes or outlines.

A. CORE QUESTIONS

RECOMMENDED TIME: 15-20 minutes

Student must answer ALL questions in this section.

1. Name three critical approaches to literary interpretation. Define one of them. Show how it might be used to illuminate the meaning of a specific text. If you are an English-Education major, explain which critical approach might be most useful to you in the high-school English classroom.
2. Describe a language studies course you have taken in the English Department. How did that course affect the way you think about language and language use?
3. Describe a writing course (beyond English 110) taken in the English Department. How did that course affect the way you think about the theory and practice of writing?

B. CONCENTRATION QUESTIONS

RECOMMENDED TIME: 15-20 minutes

Student must answer ONLY questions relating to her/his concentration.

1. Professional Writing and Rhetoric
 - a. How does your disciplinary identity in professional writing and rhetoric inform your analysis of and actions in workplace, civic, and personal contexts? Be prepared to illustrate your response with examples.
 - b. How do you define rhetoric, and how does rhetoric inform the study and practice of writing?
 - c. Identify three to five of the rhetorical strategies you find most powerful, and illustrate their application and value by referring to one or two of your own writing experiences.

2. Creative Writing
 - a. Describe the style of a contemporary writer (or two) whose work you admire. What have you learned from him or her?
 - b. How would you describe the development of your style, subject matter, and writing process?
 - c. Explain how you judge the quality of a short story, poem, or essay.

3. Literature (Choose 3 of the 5 to answer)
 - a. Choose one of the historical studies courses you have taken at Elon. Define the characteristics of the period itself and give examples of works from the period, showing how at least ONE of those works embodies the period's characteristics.
 - b. Name a cultural studies course you have taken and explain what it taught you about the value of studying literature within a specific cultural context.
 - c. Talk about a major author course you have taken. What are the distinctive features of the style and content of this author's work? How did this author's literary career develop? Did you like what you read by this author? Why or why not?
 - d. Define the term "genre." Name a genre course you have taken in the English department. Identify the distinctive formal, technical and/or thematic characteristics of this literary genre and describe a text that exemplifies them. Explain how two authors or texts influenced—by defining, enlarging or transforming—the development of this genre.
 - e. Name a CPT (Critical Practice and Theory) course you have taken in the English Department. Identify a controversy in literary studies that you explored in this course. Explain the central issues of this debate, the theoretical positions of various sides, and your own stand in the matter.

4. Teacher Licensure
 - a. Select a specific text that you studied in a literature class here at Elon and explain how you would adapt it for high-school teaching. Justify your adaptations with specific references to the text and to learning theories.
 - b. How will you integrate literature, writing, and language study in the high-school classroom?
 - c. How would you adapt your teaching to address the needs of diverse students?

The following questions should be answered in writing (typed) and brought to the assessment session.

C. PROGRAM QUESTIONS

1. Please comment on the design of your own concentration within the English Major. In particular, which courses were most and least helpful, and why?
2. Comment on the overall organization of the English Major at Elon. Do our requirements seem logical to you? Was the level of study in 300-level classes appreciably higher than in 200-level classes? What would you change, and why?

D. PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONS

1. Consider the assignments and classroom activities you have had in your English courses at Elon. Which ones helped you learn, and why? Which ones seemed less helpful? Why?
2. Can you specify some way you have grown as a result of your English studies?