

**Core Assessment Matrix (CAM)
TEMPLATE**

UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

Core Area: Literature

Spring 2007

(1) Student Learning Outcomes	(2) Measurement of Evidence	(3) Summary Results	(4) Assessment Informed Improvements
<p>Demonstrate a basic understanding of the literary, historical, social, or cultural influences that inform literary works, including diversity of perspectives, experiences, and traditions.</p>	<p>Students took two examinations (one on fiction and one on poetry) that required them to explicate a large number of texts (often comparing and contrasting them) in a range of forms and representing diverse cultural backgrounds and historical periods.</p>	<p>A vast majority of students demonstrated, in both short answer and essay questions, the ability to interpret and evaluate a wide range of fictional and poetic texts, often comparing and contrasting texts in ways that highlighted the impact of gender, culture, history, and ethnicity on the production of those texts.</p>	
<p>Articulate in writing and discussion their responses to literary texts with a view to equipping them with the knowledge, values, and sensitivity to succeed as persons and professionals.</p>	<p>Students wrote three literary critical essays for the class. The texts about which students wrote very often addressed crucial social and ethical issues.</p>	<p>Students nearly universally demonstrated strongly their ability to express both in essays and in class discussions important ethical judgments on such issues as class, ethnicity, and gender as these arose in a range of texts.</p>	
<p>Demonstrate a basic critical ability to identify, interpret, and evaluate the ideas and formal features of an integrated body of literary texts in the context of a socially responsible learning community of high quality scholarship and academic rigor.</p>	<p>Examinations required students to demonstrate facility with major terms of literary analysis. Essays required sustained, close analysis of texts using these terms and concepts. Students were required to base assertions in detailed examples and careful reading. The third and final essay required students to position their ideas in relation and</p>	<p>Though students in the main succeeded in producing coherent, focused, and substantial interpretations of multiple texts, more work is needed on selecting and explicating textual evidence (i. e., key quotations).</p>	<p>In future versions of the course, I intend to spend more time in class on the fundamentals of incorporating textual support into written arguments about literary texts.</p>

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	response to those of leading literary scholars.		
Show a sensitivity to the plurality of meanings within a literary text, including the moral implications of human choices.	Though all written assignments addressed this outcome, it was especially crucial to completion of the third essay, in which students had to wrestle with different scholarly interpretations of literary texts that addressed issues of gender and race in ways not reducible to simple "right or wrong answers."	Students overall succeeded in recognizing the moral complexities in texts by writers like Wheatley and Hawthorne. In particular, most students demonstrated the ability recognize ways in which texts could be addressed to multiple audiences with often conflicting needs and perspectives.	

Additional evidence that the general core learning outcomes are being met:

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<p>Articulate in writing and discussion their responses to literary texts with a view to equipping them with the knowledge, values, and sensitivity to succeed as persons and</p>	<p>same as above</p>	<p>To 1,2,5,6: In written work, students revealed increasing competence in conducting academic research and demonstrated improvements in argumentation, style and format.</p> <p>4&5: Class presentations showed</p>	<p>More rigorous insistence on adhering to deadlines and given formal requirements.</p>

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professionals.		students' increasing confidence in public speaking and their ability to carefully prepare and give a cohesive presentation of academic content, including audio-visual components. 3&4: Students demonstrated respect towards others with different opinions and a critical reflection of their own beliefs in sometimes controversial discussions.	
Demonstrate a basic critical ability to identify, interpret, and evaluate the ideas and formal features of an integrated body of literary texts in the context of a socially responsible learning community of high quality scholarship and academic rigor.	same as above	Regarding all performance measurements, students demonstrated a critical reflection of ideas and formal features expressed in a variety of texts and they shared and/or developed their findings within the class community. Scholarship and academic rigor were required throughout the course, and particularly apparent in most students' thoughtful preparation of reading materials and the adept completion of different components of their research projects.	As above, plus request of more extensive bibliographical references from different sources (internet and libraries).
Show a sensitivity to the plurality of meanings within a literary text, including the moral implications of human choices.	same as above	The theme of moral values and human choices stood at the center of this course and the materials in question, therefore virtually all discussions, presentations and written assignments necessitated a reflection on these issues, which the students demonstrated with high proficiency.	Allow more time for open topic class discussions, particularly at end of semester.

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Demonstrate a basic understanding of the literary, historical, social, or cultural influences that inform literary works, including diversity of perspectives, experiences, and traditions.	Students write four short-to-medium length papers incorporating their understanding of these elements. They also are required to participate in class (25% of grade) showing that they have grasped the principles involved.	All students demonstrated at least a minimum grasp of these elements; most did better than that, and 3 or 4 performed at an honors level. Most or all continue to need work on reading skills (esp. complex syntax), writing skills, accumulation and precise statement of evidence and drawing multiple conclusions from that evidence.	More intensive writing supervision is needed across the board.
Articulate in writing and discussion their responses to literary texts with a view to equipping them with the knowledge, values, and sensitivity to succeed as persons and professionals.	do	do	do
Demonstrate a basic critical ability to identify, interpret, and evaluate the ideas and formal features of an integrated body of literary texts in the context of a socially responsible learning community of high quality scholarship and academic rigor.	do	do	do
Show a sensitivity to the plurality of meanings within a literary text, including the moral implications of human choices.	do	do	do

Additional evidence that the general core learning outcomes are being met: Most English majors (and of course others) continue to be eager readers on their own, and many are aspiring writers. A surprisingly large number of them are actively

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engaged in public service and find relationships between the literature they read and write and their work in the larger community.

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Articulate in writing and discussion their responses to literary texts with a view to equipping them with the knowledge, values, and sensitivity to succeed as persons and professionals.	Written research papers on selection of specific period poets; class discussions of poets and poetry; participation in civic events	Writing of reflection papers on cultural diversity, ethical-moral issues, and social problems; midterm and final research paper/project; optional creative projects.	Tailor specific class projects for specific community areas of San Francisco; Litquake Attendance in Fall Semester and Participation in Poetry Month during Spring Semester.
Demonstrate a basic critical ability to identify, interpret, and evaluate the ideas and formal features of an integrated body of literary texts in the context of a socially responsible learning community of high quality scholarship and academic rigor.	Students utilized resources of Gleeson Library Reference Room; visited Rare Book & Manuscript Room to view SF literary collection with curator; visited Archives. Became familiar with SF Public Library Main Branch as well as various internet sites on poets, poetry, and literary movements.	Reports and research papers with critical commentary by teacher.	Incorporate new poetry explanation materials into the course syllabus package sent by email to the registered students; Offer detailed explanation of expectations, research methodology, as well as grading rubric for written material.
Show a sensitivity to the plurality of meanings within a literary text, including the moral implications of human choices.	Midterm/final term papers; Examination questions concerning moral choices faced in urban life by specific poets	Class discussions of articles and materials in 2 required textbooks; Emphasis in Spring Semester 2007 on African-American poets as well as Japanese Internment Camp Poetry	Focus on Chicano Poets during Fall semester 2007 for 60 th anniversary commemorations of Mendez v. Westminster (1947) legal case.

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Additional evidence that the general core learning outcomes are being met:

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<p>Demonstrate a basic understanding of the literary, historical, social, or cultural influences that inform literary works, including diversity of perspectives, experiences, and traditions.</p>	<p>traditional methods of assessment: hold students to their responsibility to complete assignments that meet course criteria through both traditional and nontraditional teaching techniques. The assignment that most clearly demonstrated their curiosity (one of my own learning outcomes) were the reflections; their understanding -- exams; their general interest - in-class discussion.</p>	<p>normal: most students followed through, some excelled, and some failed to adequately complete the work necessary to show their competence in this area. For whatever reasons, this class was unusually chatty, responsive, and cheerful.</p>	<p>I am quite happy with the way I run this class in terms of balance of assignments and consequences for completing (or not completing) requirements. The only change I would make would be to less flexible about when they turn in their daily and weekly assignments.</p>
<p>Articulate in writing and discussion their responses to literary texts with a view to equipping them with the knowledge, values, and sensitivity to succeed as persons and professionals.</p>	<p>I require students to write in-class freewrites almost every class period in response to a specific question, write a formal reflection on each new reading assignment that is assessed for quality as well as content, write a preview of their presentation, and write two essay exams that are assessed in terms of form and content.</p>	<p>Student writing in core classes is generally quite mixed. This class was normal in that respect.. I used TAs this semester to help students with their writing, Writing does improve over the course of the semester in part because of the quantity they are required to produce and partly because I require a variety of types of writing, on a continuum from informal to formal, on a regular basis.</p>	<p>Using TAs was a good decision. Students who chose to had a significant resource in the TAs to help them with their writing. It is clear that the Business School needs to emphasize the quality of student writing more than they do, as their students, as a rule suffer most from writing that is not up to college standards, or, I would think, to the world of Business. Students in the Social Sciences also clearly do not get enough feedback on the quality of their writing, although they do quite a bit of writing from what I understand. My observation is that</p>

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			they are good in terms of content, but have significant formal problems which their own professors need to respond to. On the whole, students in the humanities do better than the rest of the students in this class in the formal elements of writing and are equal to students in the Social Sciences in content.
Demonstrate a basic critical ability to identify, interpret, and evaluate the ideas and formal features of an integrated body of literary texts in the context of a socially responsible learning community of high quality scholarship and academic rigor.	The texts were carefully chosen to build on one another as well as to convey basic concepts on which we focused during the semester. Students responded in the ways I discuss above, developing smaller, more personal communities within the macrocosm of the classroom. This was in part because I have the presentation groups meet together for small group assignments throughout the semester, and they form their primary bond with this group.	The results were, as usual, uneven, some students growing in conceptual dexterity more than others, often in direct relationship to the effort they put into their assignments. This is normal. Others work hard but simply have less critical dexterity than some of their peers. In my class they are able to make up for this deficit, which some simply can't help, by following through on their assignments in a regular way.	More than any other class I teach, the feedback I get from students in this one is positive about their growth in understanding the material. This is on a general basis: most of the students in the class express the self-evaluation that they knew or understood little to nothing of the subject matter before taking the class, but leave with a new set of criteria by which to judge the material, theoretical, and social situations we explore. Those that come in with negative attitudes usually become positive in their response by the 6 th week and few leave with negative attitudes.
Show a sensitivity to the plurality of meanings within a literary text, including the moral implications of human choices.	This was measured through the usual techniques described above, but was probably most visible in discussion and presentations.	normal, with the exception of one student who was openly hostile to the material. I let the class take responsibility for responding to this student's hostility.	Allowing the class to take care of the fly in the ointment worked well. In fact, the hostile student boosted the sensitivity of students who might otherwise have been less open to the subject matter.

Additional evidence that the general core learning outcomes are being met: Informal student feedback, which was invariably positive with the exception of one student. I also was unable to cover all the material because of the depth of student interest and level of discussion -- they were an exceptionally chatty class. I consider this to be a good sign. The general class attitude was wholesome and I enjoyed teaching this group of students.

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Demonstrate a basic understanding of the literary, historical, social, or cultural influences that inform literary works, including diversity of perspectives, experiences, and traditions.	Basic understanding assessed 4 times during semester with pop quizzes.	Quizzes demonstrate clearly students' familiarity with (i.e. reading of) selected texts. Average pop quiz grade for 2 sections = B.	Pop quizzes to be replaced by weekly writing assignments to ensure more considered responses to the material, while continuing to test for basic understanding and knowledge.
Articulate in writing and discussion their responses to literary texts with a view to equipping them with the knowledge, values, and sensitivity to succeed as persons and professionals.	Students are required to read about and comment in class and papers about the social, historical and literary background to 13 texts per semester	In-class discussion, plus papers (2), midterms and finals all demonstrate that students are gaining ability to articulate their responses orally and in writing. A B+ average for each section, and no grades below C+ bear witness to this.	None envisaged.
Demonstrate a basic critical ability to identify, interpret, and evaluate the ideas and formal features of an integrated body of literary texts in the context of a socially responsible learning community of high quality scholarship and academic rigor.	Paper and discussion topics specifically require students to go beyond description and repetition of ideas in texts, and to evaluate them analytically. Grades reflect the depth of thinking demonstrated.	The more students are asked to analyze, understand, and connect the ideas that form the backbone of classical dramatic literature, the more actively involved they become in the classes, and the more complete their responses to the selected texts.	Application of a higher standard of academic rigor and excellence to be applied to written analyses.
Show a sensitivity to the plurality of meanings within a literary text, including the moral implications of human choices.	Explicit choice of discussion topics focus on individual and social action, and its consequences within the texts, and the world of the play and that of the students.	A very satisfactory level of individual expression of the way in which dramatic literature charts the course of human enlightenment and social justice over 2500 years.	None envisaged.

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