Objective/Outcome 1:
While there are many program options for students based on our different concentrations and their specific needs and interests, all of our students must enroll in two graduate survey courses in fiction, poetry, or drama. We believe that assessing success in these courses provides one gauge of the strength of the program as a whole.

Method of Assessment:
The Assessment Committee will sample syllabi in all survey courses and will evaluate a random sampling of A, B, and C papers/exams from each survey course to determine whether or not students are gaining this broad knowledge.

Standard for Success:
At least 75% of students sampled will get a rating of satisfactory for demonstrating knowledge of literary history and for knowledge of form.

Objective/Outcome 2:
All students that receive an M.A. in Literature must pass the comprehensive exam. The exam provides a measure of the student’s ability to demonstrate the skills and knowledge they developed in the program.

Method of Assessment:
The assessment committee will evaluate the comprehensive exams to see where program strengths and weaknesses may lie. They will look closely at papers that received the rating of “Fail” to determine where the program might not be meeting its objectives.
Standard for Success: 
At least 75% will pass the exam by achieving a rating of “Satisfactory” or better. Of those, 100% will write coherent, organized essays with closely reasoned and sophisticated responses.

Objective/Outcome 3: 
The Department encourages students to write a Master’s Thesis. The thesis is the best available gauge of potential for further scholarship. A successful thesis will often play a large role in acceptance to Ph.D. programs.

Method of Assessment: 
Students will write a sustained argument with clarity, creativity, and persuasiveness. They will also demonstrate their interpretive and analytical skills and ability to close-read literary texts.

Standard for Success: 
100% of our students will demonstrate these skills in their thesis.

Objective/Outcome 4: 
The Department expects that all students that graduate from the program will find success in the job market, or in furthering their academic career through acceptance to a Ph.D. program.

Method of Assessment: 
We will track where our students go upon graduating.

Standard for Success: 
Success in this regard will be measured by the quality of Ph.D. programs to which our students are accepted, as well as the number of students successfully employed. The Department will also report students that find jobs in teaching that have graduated from our “teaching” concentration.