Specific Courses being assessed:

- ENGL A340: Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales* (Sebastian)
- ENGL A341: Chaucer, *Troilus and Other Poems* (Sebastian)
- ENGL U188: The World of the Vikings (Sebastian)
- ENGL U199: Arthurian Legend (Sebastian)
- ENGL U195: Legend of Robin Hood (Smith)

1. Does the syllabus demonstrate satisfactory focus on learning objectives (see Assessment Matrix)?

   **B1** This particular assessment was designed to meet the guidelines of ENGL A316 “Medieval Survey.” Classes taught this year are too focused to be able to fulfill this requirement, however ENGL A341 does make an effort to delve into a great variety of forms of medieval poetry and ENGL U199 seems to cover the conventions and techniques in chronicle, romance, and lai.

   **B2** Dr. Sebastian’s courses do an excellent job of locating this material within a historical, but also cultural and literary, framework.

   **B3** All of the above courses meet this goal adequately. It is fair to say that “close reading” is an essential skill required (and taught) in all of these courses.

   **B4** Dr. Sebastian works hard to place works into a European context, so that students are capable of better understanding their multilingual and transnational character.

   **E1** All courses require a significant amount of writing.

   **E2** All courses include a presentation component.

2. What is the weakest aspect of the English courses? How should this be addressed?

Although the syllabus for “Legend of Robin Hood” is solid and interesting, both exit surveys and complaints from medieval studies students have highlighted that the course, as it is presently taught, includes very little medieval content. Consequently, the committee has decided to drop this course from the Medieval Studies curriculum.

It would be desirable for the literature courses to give more attention to continental literature. Although a component of A341 does make some reference to Boccaccio and Dante, these figures are not treated in other medieval literature courses. La Chanson de Roland, and Capellanus also appear to receive scant attention. The hiring of a second scholar in medieval literature would easily rectify this problem.
3. What is the strongest aspect of the English courses? Why?

Dr. Sebastian challenges his students by requiring them to read and discuss some of the most demanding and theoretical writers in the field today (for example: Elaine Tuttle Hansen, Paul Strohm, Louise Fradenburg, Carolyn Dinshaw). Certainly, students who are capable of grappling with such difficult material will be more than ready for graduate school.

Loyola has found a true gem in Dr. Sebastian. His diverse training and interests permit him to offer courses from Chaucer to medieval drama to the Vikings. The latter, in particular, it should be noted is very rarely taught at North American universities. Not only has Dr. Sebastian put together a creative and unique offering with the Vikings class, but it is most likely one of the few common curriculum courses at Loyola that is actually interdisciplinary, drawing not only on literature, but also history, archaeology and law.

Students are given an opportunity to immerse themselves in some of the most challenging works of medieval literature. The cultural and historical contexts for the texts are established very clearly, and students are given in depth exposure to the techniques of modern literary criticism. Another excellent feature of the literature courses is that students are expected to be active learners. In A340 they are expected to complete exercises in translation and commentary; in A340 and A341 they are required to serve as discussion leaders for class presentations. Through these innovative pedagogical techniques, the Middle Ages come alive in a very vivid way for contemporary students.

Perhaps most impressive, Dr. Sebastian has created coherent courses that allow students to encounter some of the most important areas of medieval (English) literature, not only in its own right but in context, including consideration of such areas as material culture (for the Vikings class) and the historical issues that shape the transmission of a legend (Arthurian legend). Not only has he done an excellent job crossing the disciplines, but he has made every effort to exploit Loyola’s resources and expose students to new ways of thinking by bringing in guest lectures by colleagues (Fr. Carter, Alice Clarke, Sara Butler) to help the process. In that way he provides a model for CC courses as well as literature courses in medieval studies.

4. Are additional learning objectives being met in the English courses?

Nowhere in the learning objectives does Dr. Sebastian note that he will also engage in linguistic training. Teaching students to read Middle English is no easy endeavor, and yet it is clear from his syllabi that this is a skill he teaches in a very short period.

5. Additional comments or concerns?