

Weber State University
Annual Assessment of Evidence of Learning

Department of Foreign Languages
2015-2016

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Department Assessment Committee

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I. Verification of Information

A. Introductory Statement:

The information online is current and correct.

B. Mission Statement

The information online is current.

C. Student Learning Outcomes

The Department has established five learning outcomes and made some changes to them in 2013-14; they are presented below with expected student documentation:

Student Learning Outcomes	Evidence
Graduating majors will:	Students will:
1. Demonstrate speaking and listening proficiency in the language they are studying.	Take an oral test administered on a computer.
2. Demonstrate writing ability, including a command of grammar and appropriate usage to express their ideas.	(This skill will be evaluated based on documents submitted for outcomes 3, 4 and 5).
3. Demonstrate the ability to write in different styles.	Submit at least three documents written in at least three different styles. Students will label each document with their determination of its style.
4. Write an analysis or a literary or cultural work in the language.	Submit a written analysis of a literary or cultural work. (What qualifies as a "literary work" may be interpreted broadly).
5. Describe and explain aspects of the culture(s) of the language being studied.	Submit one sample of their work (written paper, film, pamphlet, etc.) in which they describe or explain an aspect of a target culture.

D. Curriculum Grid

Gaining proficiency in a foreign or second language is largely a matter of guided exposure and practice; therefore, each of our upper-division courses includes assignments and activities that focus on several of our Student Learning Outcomes.

	Course		Outcomes				
			1: Oral	2: Grammar	3: Styles	4: Analysis	5: Culture
Core	3060	Grammar & Comp	x	x	x		x
	3160	Into to Literature	x	x	x	x	x
Lang.	3220	Phonetics & Phonology	x	x			x
	3360	Advanced Grammar	x	x	x		
	4220	Topics in Linguistics	x	x			x
Culture	3550	Cultural Heritage I	x	x	x		x
	3560	Cultural Heritage II	x	x	x		x
	3570	Topics in Culture	x	x	x		x
Literature	3610	Lit. Survey I	x	x	x	x	
	3620	Lit. Survey II	x	x	x	x	
	3630	Lit. Genres	x	x	x	x	
	3650	Lit. Periods	x	x	x	x	
	3670	Lit. Authors	x	x	x	x	
	3690	Topics in Lit.	x	x	x	x	
	4620	Survey of Lit. I	x	x	x	x	
	4630	Survey of Lit. II	x	x	x	x	
	4690	Topics in Lit.	x	x	x	x	
Specific Purposes (business, community engagement, medical, translation, etc.)	3320	Applied Language	x	x			x
	3710	Business Lang. I	x	x	x	x	x
	3720	Specific Purposes I	x	x			x
	3730	Specific Purposes II	x	x			x
	3740	Trans/Interp I	x	x			x
	4710	Business Lang. II	x	x	x	x	x
Study Abroad	4740	Trans/Interp II	x	x			x
	3850	Study Abroad	x	x			x
	4850	Study Abroad	x	x			x

E. Assessment Plan

Assessment of Majors

The Department of Foreign Languages began assessment of our Student Learning Outcomes in 1999 and established FL 4990 “Senior Assessment” in Fall 2000.

Plans for the future include the following:

- Creating an online portfolio that is accessible to students after declaring a major so that they may upload documents to be assessed as they are completed, rather than a last-minute search during their last semester. It is hoped that individual instructors can help guide students in uploading excellent and relevant documents to the intended category in order to avoid a null-submission for any given category.
- The department’s Assessment Committee is partnering with the department’s Curriculum Committee to create common course objectives and outcomes for the courses required across language majors (3060 & 3160).

General Education Assessment

During the Spring-2015 semester, we gathered data from sections of FL 2020 in German, French, Japanese and Spanish. Students were required to participate and the data was assessed against the three Humanities Outcomes. This assessment will be repeated in the Spring-2017 semester.

II. Results of 2015-16 Assessment

A. Major Courses

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

The Department has established five learning outcomes. For each outcome we have listed the expected documentation that each student must provide, a description of the rubric or method used to evaluate student proficiency and the level (standard) that we expect our graduating majors to meet. Our departmental goal (threshold) is that, on each learning outcome, at least 75% of our students will meet or exceed our standard.

First Outcome

Evidence	Assessment	Standard
1. Students will demonstrate speaking and listening proficiency in the language they are studying.		
Students will take an oral test administered on a computer while enrolled in FL 4990.	Tests will be rated using the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Guidelines. These ratings are: Novice-Low Novice-Mid Novice-High Intermediate-Low Intermediate-Mid Intermediate-High Advanced-Low Advanced-Mid Advanced-High Superior All full time faculty in the department are trained by our national professional organization in the use of the Proficiency Guidelines.	Students will have met the department standard if they rate an Advanced-Low or higher.

Second Outcome

2. Students will demonstrate writing ability, including a command of grammar and appropriate usage, to express their ideas.		
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<i>(This outcome involves the documents submitted for Outcomes 3, 4 and 5.)</i>	Documents will be rated using the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines Papers; however, attention is focused on grammar as well as on text type or function.	Students will have met this standard if they demonstrate the usage of an Advanced Low speaker/writer.
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Third Outcome

3. Students will demonstrate the ability to write in different styles.

While enrolled in FL 4990, students will submit at least three documents written in at least three different styles; they will label each document with their determination of its style. Generally, these will be documents they have prepared while completing the courses required for the major.	Writing styles will be tallied if students demonstrate a basic understanding of the styles they have submitted.	The standard will be met if the student submits three different documents written in different styles and shows a basic understanding of the styles submitted.
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Fourth Outcome

4. Students will write an analysis of a literary or cultural work in the language.

While enrolled in FL 4990, students will submit a written analysis of a literary work or cultural product. (What qualifies as a “literary work” may be interpreted broadly).	Raters will check for the following: <input type="checkbox"/> Thesis or main idea <input type="checkbox"/> Support of defense of the main idea with evidence <input type="checkbox"/> Summary of a plot or idea presented in the work	The standard will be met with two of the criteria.
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Fifth Outcome

5. Students will describe and explain aspects of the culture(s) of the language being studied.

While enrolled in FL 4990, students will submit one sample of their work (written paper, film, pamphlet, etc.) in which they describe or explain an aspect of a target culture.	Raters will check for at least two of the following: <input type="checkbox"/> Description of a cultural product <input type="checkbox"/> Description of a cultural practice <input type="checkbox"/> Explanation of cultural perspective: how the product or practice connects to a larger social context.	The standard will be met with two of the criteria.
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INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

For each of our outcomes, the threshold level we aim for is 75%; that is, we hope that at least 75% of our graduating majors will meet the standard. In each of the tables below, language sections that did not meet this threshold are shaded in grey. Under each table is a graph that shows overall scores for the past five years.

Outcome 1:

During the in 2015-16 academic year, majors in French, German, and Spanish reached or exceeded our 75% threshold. Overall, 97% of our students met this standard. The only student who did not meet our standard did not submit oral proficiency files to be assessed. Last year 87% of students met our goal for this outcome and we are pleased to see this progress.

	French			German			Spanish			Total		
	N	Met	%	N	Met	%	N	Met	%	N	Met	%
Oral proficiency	6	5	83%	2	2	100%	34	34	100%	42	41	97%

Outcome 2:

This year, majors in all three languages met or exceeded our standard.

	French			German			Spanish			Total		
	N	Met	%	N	Met	%	N	Met	%	N	Met	%
Writing proficiency	6	6	100%	2	2	100%	34	34	100%	42	42	100%

Outcome 3:

This year, majors in all three languages met or exceeded our standard.

	French			German			Spanish			Total		
	N	Met	%	N	Met	%	N	Met	%	N	Met	%
Writing in different styles	6	6	100%	2	2	100%	34	30	88%	42	38	90%

Outcome 4:

Overall, we exceeded the threshold for this outcome.

	French			German			Spanish			Total		
	N	Met	%	N	Met	%	N	Met	%	N	Met	%

Written analysis	6	6	100%	2	2	100%	34	31	86%	42	39	93%
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Outcome 5:

Overall, we met the threshold for this outcome.

Description or explanation of culture	French			German			Spanish			Total		
	N	Met	%	N	Met	%	N	Met	%	N	Met	%
Description or explanation of culture	6	5	83%	2	2	100%	34	29	85%	42	36	86%

Action Plan

In the coming years, the Department will work on improving the percentage of majors who meet standards for Outcome 5. We do not believe that there are serious or systemic problems with the experiences our students are having in classes nor in the way we are approaching the teaching or assessment of our outcomes.

Because Outcome 5 are not consistently being met, the Department Assessment Committee will recommend that the Department Chair schedule a training session to review outcomes and assessment rubrics and to encourage instructors to help their students gain the proficiencies needed to meet each outcome's standard.

B. **High-impact Learning Courses**

The five learning objectives of the Department of Foreign Languages do not vary significantly across courses. Our objectives are proficiency based; that is, their goal is to increase spoken and written proficiency in the language being studied as defined by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (see the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines here: <http://www.actfl.org/publications/guidelines-and-manuals/actfl-proficiency-guidelines-2012>).

Although we have a number of courses listed as Community Engaged Learning, we do not evaluate or assess our departmental learning objectives differently in these courses. However, the faculty teaching these courses are collecting data which will likely be included in next year's assessment report.

III. Summary of Artifact Collection Procedure

Artifact	Learning Outcome Measured	When/How Collected?	Where Stored?
Six student recordings. These are responses to written prompts in the language of study.	Outcome 1: Oral proficiency	As an exam administered during FL 4990—Senior Assessment.	In Canvas
Three or more samples reflecting different writing styles.	Outcome 3: Writing in different styles	Saved by students as work done in several classes. Submitted during FL 4990.	In Canvas
A written analysis of a literary or cultural work.	Outcome 4: Literary or Cultural Analysis	Saved by students as work done in at least two course. Submitted during FL 4990.	In Canvas
A written description of a cultural product or practice	Outcome 5: Appreciation of Culture	Saved by students as work done in several courses. Submitted during FL 4990.	In Canvas

IV. Responses to questions

A. Reflecting on this year's assessment(s), how does the evidence of student learning impact your faculty's confidence in the program being reviewed; how does that analysis change when compared with previous assessment evidence?

Data from the past four years, representing our students' performance on our five Learning Outcomes, are represented in the table below. For each outcome, data are also broken down to represent the languages in which our students can major. Outcomes with fewer than 75% our graduating majors met the standard are shaded in grey.

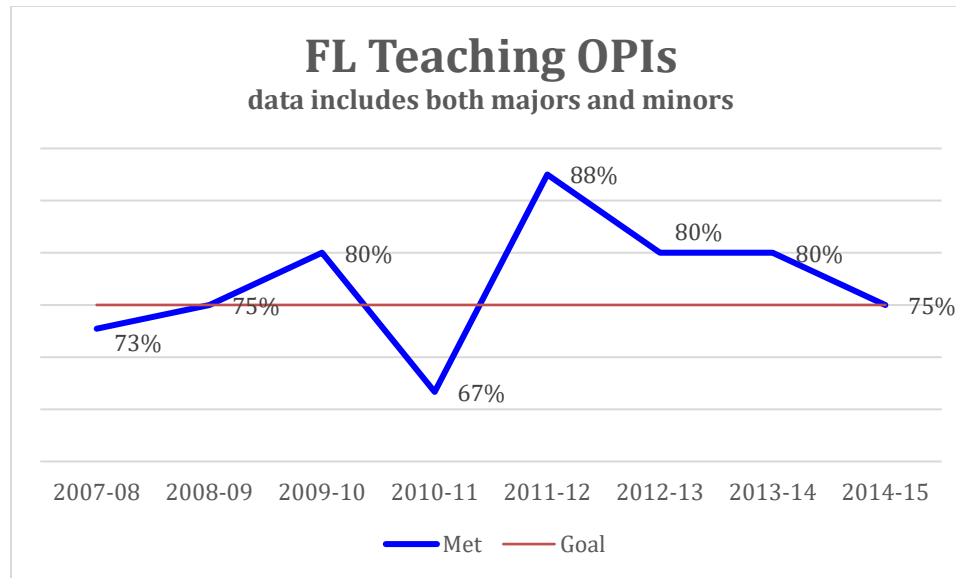
		1: Oral			2: Written			3: Styles			4: Analysis			5: Culture		
		N	Met	%	N	Met	%	N	Met	%	N	Met	%	N	Met	%
2010	French	1	0	0%	1	1	100%	1	1	100%	1	1	100%	1	1	100%
	German	8	7	88%	7	4	57%	7	7	100%	7	3	43%	7	7	100%
	Spanish	24	18	75%	24	18	75%	25	21	84%	25	18	72%	22	19	86%
	ALL	33	25	76%	32	23	72%	33	29	88%	33	22	67%	30	27	90%
2011	French	0			0			0			0			0		
	German	2	2	100%	2	2	100%	2	2	100%	2	2	100%	2	2	100%
	Spanish	23	23	100%	21	21	100%	21	21	100%	20	16	80%	20	18	90%
	ALL	25	25	100%	23	23	100%	23	23	100%	22	18	82%	22	20	91%
2012	French	7	4	57%	6	5	83%	7	6	86%	7	5	71%	7	6	86%
	German	6	2	33%	6	3	50%	6	6	100%	6	4	67%	6	6	100%
	Spanish	27	24	89%	27	20	74%	27	25	93%	27	13	48%	27	25	93%
	ALL	40	30	75%	39	28	72%	40	37	93%	40	22	55%	40	37	93%
2013	French	6	5	83%	6	6	100%	6	6	100%	6	4	67%	6	5	83%
	German	5	2	40%	6	6	100%	6	5	83%	6	6	100%	6	6	100%
	Spanish	35	27	77%	36	34	94%	36	35	97%	33	24	73%	36	25	69%
	ALL	46	34	74%	48	46	96%	48	46	96%	45	34	76%	48	36	75%
2014	French	2	2	100%	2	2	100%	2	2	100%	2	2	100%	2	2	100%
	German	2	0	0%	2	2	100%	2	2	100%	2	2	100%	2	2	100%

	Spanish	41	37	90%	42	42	100%	42	34	81%	42	36	86%	42	25	60%
	ALL	45	39	87%	46	46	100%	46	38	83%	46	40	87%	46	29	63%
2015	French	6	5	83%	6	6	100%	6	6	100%	6	6	100%	6	5	83%
	German	2	2	100%	2	2	100%	2	2	100%	2	2	100%	2	2	100%
	Spanish	34	34	100%	34	34	100%	34	30	88%	34	31	86%	34	29	85%
	ALL	42	41	97%	42	42	100%	42	38	90%	42	39	93%	42	36	86%

No clear trend is visible. However, it is encouraging that this past year was our best, having met or exceeded our threshold of 75% on all Outcomes.

In addition to the Oral Test that our majors complete for Outcome 1 in FL 4990, all of our foreign language teaching majors and minors must complete a national test, the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI), administered by ACTFL. Utah State licensure requires that they achieve an Advanced-Low rating or higher. Students who receive a lower rating are not permitted to complete the teaching major and we generally counsel them to declare a 'regular' degree in French, German or Spanish.

The table below shows the percentage of foreign language teaching majors and minors who rated Advanced Low or higher on the OPI. For the past four years, our department average has either met or exceeded this national standard. During the four years previous to that, we met our threshold (75%) only half the time. We are very pleased with this progress.



Outcomes 2 and 3 both show some improvement over the past four years. This is likely due to better collection of documents in FL 4990. Two years ago we began asking students to label their submitted documents as to genre or style.

Outcome 5, dealing with students' perspectives on cultural products and practices, was redefined this past year. Predictably, the percentage of students who met or exceeded the newly defined standard went down—although we still met our threshold of 75%. This fall may be due to student performance but is also likely due, in part, to a weakness in rater reliability.

B. With whom did you share the results of the year’s assessment efforts?

This report will be shared with all faculty in the Department of Foreign Languages, with the Dean of the Telitha E. Linquist College of Arts and Humanities, and with the University Office of Institution Effectiveness.

C. Based on your program’s assessment findings, what subsequent action will your program take?

To remediate the weaknesses seen in Outcome 5, we recommend that the Department schedule some time, before student portfolios are next evaluated, to review the standards' rubrics and encourage instructors to help their students gain the proficiencies needed to meet each outcome's standard.

- D. *We are interested in better understanding how departments/programs assess their graduating seniors. Please provide a short narrative describing the practices/curriculum in place for your department/program. Please include both direct and indirect measures employed.*

In order to complete a major in the Foreign Languages Department, students must complete a 1-credit course (FL 4990), which seeks to collect the following artifacts: six student recordings, three or more writing samples reflective of different styles, a written analysis of a literary or cultural work, and a written description of a cultural product of practice. Student portfolios are rated by FL faculty at the beginning of each academic year using a common rubric across languages. The rubric is based on proficiency outcomes of the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), in which all full time-faculty have been trained.

Appendix

Information about the full-time and adjunct faculty contracted by your department: 2015-16

Faculty	
With Doctoral Degrees	12
Full-time Tenured	6
Full-time Non-Tenured (includes tenure-track)	5
Part-time	1
With Master's Degrees	14
Full-time Tenured	-
Full-time Non-Tenured	2
Part-time	12
With Bachelor's Degrees	4
Full-time Tenured	-
Full-time Non-tenured	-
Part-time	4
Total Headcount Faculty	30
Full-time Tenured	6
Full-time Non-tenured	7
Part-time	17