# Department of Modern Languages Full Assessment Report 2015-2016 Submitted by: Carmela Pesca, Chair September 2016

BA programs in French, German, Italian and Spanish, and BS programs in French, Italian and Spanish

#### **Preamble**

The Department of Modern Languages offers both a Bachelor of Arts degree and a Bachelor of Science degree leading to Certification to teach languages. Since students in both degree programs take the same courses in language, culture and literature, learning outcomes are identical and are assessed together.

The Department has continued to implement its assessment plan, which includes goals, instruments and rubrics for all undergraduate assessments. The assessment plan is attached to this report. All of our assessments are conducted by Modern Language faculty as an integrated part of their regular class work. We have adjusted course cycling and pre-requisites for advanced courses, in order to better coordinate offerings, while providing students with more opportunities to use acquired knowledge and language skills.

### **Section 1) Learning Outcomes**

The Department has established the following four learning outcomes for all the languages taught that lead to an undergraduate degree.

Students are expected to:

- Speak at an Advanced Low oral proficiency level in the target language.
- Write at an Advanced Low written proficiency level in the target language.
- Use the target language to discuss major topics related to the cultures of countries and communities where the target language is spoken.
- Use the target language to discuss the literary works of major authors of countries where the target language is spoken.

### **Section 2) Findings**

### **2.1. Outcome #1**: Advanced Low in Oral Proficiency

The Department uses several instruments to assess Oral Proficiency. These instruments include Oral Presentations in courses with a focus on the oral component, as well as in Culture courses. These assessments are evaluated according to rubrics prepared by the Department.

These rubrics are keyed to the Oral Proficiency Guidelines developed by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). Graduating seniors in the BS program are required by the State to take an independently conducted Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI). The Department offers advisory OPIs to Professional Studies candidates.

See Rubric associated with this outcome in the attached Assessment plan, Appendix B, page 12.

Data for this outcome is usually collected by instructors in the fall, because most orally oriented courses are taught in the fall. We also include an oral assessment in culture courses, which may be taught either in the spring or in the fall semester, depending on each language's cycling. However, due to the closure of the School of Education database, we were unable to collect data in the Fall 2015 semester. In the Spring 2016, the department's Assessment Committee, chaired by Prof. Gustavo Mejía, developed a new assessment submission procedure, which has allowed us to collect data again. The majority of students perform at either the acceptable or the target level.

Outcome	S	oring 201	6		Fall 2015		S	pring 201	5		Fall 2014	
Oral	DNM	ACC	T	DNM	ACC	T	DNM	ACC	T	DNM	ACC	T
Proficiency:												
Adv. Low												
Oral	1	11	9	Data no	t collected	d due	7	6	13	8	7	13
Presentation				to closu	re of Sch.	of Ed.					l <i>'</i>	10
in Culture				databas	e and char	nge in						
classes in				informa	tion syste	m						
Spanish					•							
Oral	4	2	6	Data no	t collected	d due	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	3	14
Presentations				to closu	re of Sch.	of Ed.						1.
in <b>Spanish</b>				databas	e and char	nge in						
classes				informa	tion syste	m						
Oral	0	8	3		t collected		0	7	0	N/A	N/A	N/A
Presentation				to closu	re of Sch.	of Ed.				11//1	11//1	11/11
in Culture				databas	e and char	nge in						
classes in				informa	tion syste	m						
Italian					•							
Oral	N/A	N/A	N/A	Data no	t collected	d due	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	3	0
Presentations				to closu	re of Sch.	of Ed.						
in <b>Italian</b>				databas	e and char	nge in						
classes				informa	tion syste	m						
Oral	N/A	N/A	N/A	Offered	l by SCS	U as	0	3	3	N/A	N/A	N/A
Presentation				Distanc	e Learnin	g				14/11	1 1/21	1 1/12
in Culture				course f	or first tir	ne.						
classes in				Collecti	on of data	needs						
French				to be co	ordinated							
Oral	Data no	t submitte	d	Data no	t collected	d due	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	0	2
Presentations				to closu	re of Sch.	of Ed.				_		
in French				databas	e and char	nge in						
classes				informa	tion syste	m						
Oral	N/A	N/A	N/A	Not off	ered		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Presentation												
in Culture												
classes in												
German												
Oral	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Presentations												
in <b>German</b>												
classes	ĺ						1					

\*DNM = Do not meet; ACC = Acceptable; T = Target

Outcome	I	Fall 2013		Sp	ring 201.	3		Fall 2012	2	I	all 2011		S	Spring 20	11
Oral	DNM	ACC	T	DNM	ACC	T	DN	ACC	T	DNM	ACC	T	D	ACC	T
Proficiency:							M						N		
Adv. Low			4.0				_		4.0				M		
Oral	2	25	10	3	12	9	2	8	10	0	2	17	5	11	9
Presentation															
in Culture															
classes in															
Spanish Oral	0	13	4	N/A	N/A	N/	0	0	5		1.1	-	N/	N/A	N/
Presentations	U	13	4	N/A	IN/A	A	U	U	3	2	11	8	A A	N/A	
in <b>Spanish</b>						A							A		A
classes															
Oral	0	9	2	0	1	0	0	0	1		·		0	0	7
Presentation	U	,		\ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \	1	U	U	U	1	N/A	N/A	N/	١ ٠	U	′
in Culture												A			
classes in															
Italian															
Oral	0	2	0	N/A	N/A	N/	0	1	0	0	0	1	N/	N/A	N/
Presentations		_		1 1/12	11/12	A	Ů	1		U	U	1	A	11/12	A
in <b>Italian</b>															
classes															
Oral	N/A	N/A	N/	N/A	N/A	N/	0	2	1	N/A	N/A	N/	0	9	7
Presentation			A			A				IVA	IVA				
in Culture												A			
classes in															
French															
Oral	N/A	N/A	N/	N/A	N/A	N/	0	0	2	0	3	2	N/	N/A	2
Presentations			A			A							A		
in <b>French</b>															
classes															
Oral	N/A	N/A	N/	N/A	N/A	N/	N/A	N/A	N/	0	4	0	N/	N/A	1
Presentation			A			A			A				A		
in Culture															
classes in															
German			L	L		L	L	1	1		1		L		L
Oral	N/A	N/A	N/	N/A	N/A	N/	0	0	0	0	2	1	N/	N/A	N/
Presentations			A			A							A		A
in <b>German</b>															
classes															

DNM = Do not meet; ACC = Acceptable; T = Target

### **2.2. Outcome** #2: Advanced Low in Writing Proficiency

The Department uses essays and other forms of student written compositions to assess writing proficiency. This outcome is assessed by instructors in the Spring, because most writing courses are taught in the Spring. These assessments are evaluated by means of rubrics designed by the Department and keyed to the Writing Guidelines of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). Graduating Seniors in the BS Program are required by the State to take an independently conducted Writing Proficiency Exam. The majority of students perform at either the acceptable or the target level.

The rubric associated with this outcome can be found in the attached Assessment plan, Appendix C, pages 15-16.

Outcome	Spr	ring 2016		Spring 2014			Spring 2015			Spring 2013			Spring 2012	Spring	2011	
Written	DNM	ACC	T	DNM	ACC	T	DNM	ACC	T	DNM	ACC	T		DNM	ACC	T
Proficiency:																
Adv. Low																
Written Portfolio	4	2	6	2	14	3	4	1	8	0	0	5	Data not	0	3	23
in Spanish 336													available			
Written Portfolio	0	2	1	0	4	1	0	2	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	Data not	0	0	2
in Italian 336													available			
Written Portfolio	Data n	ot submitt	ed	Data	a not		1	0	1	0	1	1	Data not	0	1	4
in French 336				subm	nitted								available			
Written Portfolio	No	t offered		Data	a not		No	t offered	<u> </u>	0	0	1	Data not	1	3	2
in German 336				subm	nitted								available			

DNM = Do not meet; ACC = Acceptable; T = Target

# **2.3. Outcome #3**: Discussion of Cultures in Target Language

The Department uses Oral Presentations to assess this outcome. This outcome is assessed mostly in the spring. These assessments are evaluated by means of rubrics designed by the Department and keyed to National Standards. The majority of students performed at either the acceptable or the target level.

The rubric associated with this outcome can be found in the attached Assessment plan, Appendix E, pages 22-23.

Outcome	Sı	pring 201	.6	]	Fall 2015		S	pring 201	15		Fall 2014		Spring 2014
Culture knowledge	DNM	ACC	Т	DNM	ACC	Т	DNM	ACC	T	DNM	ACC	T	
Oral Presentation in Culture classes in <b>Spanish</b>	1	11	9	to closu database	t collected re of Sch. e and chan tion system	of Ed.	7	6	13	8	7	13	Data not available
Oral Presentation in Culture classes in Italian	0	8	3	information system  Data not collected due to closure of Sch. of Ed. database and change in information system			0	7	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	Data not available
Oral Presentation in Culture classes in <b>French</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	Offered by SCSU as Distance Learning course for first time. Collection of data needs to be coordinated.		0	3	3	N/A	N/A	N/A	Data not available	
Oral Presentation in Culture classes in German	N/A	N/A	N/A	Not offered		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Data not available	

Outcome	F	all 2013		Sp	ring 201	3	Fall 2012			Spring 2012	Fall 2011			Spring 2011		
Culture knowledge	DNM	ACC	T	DNM	ACC	T	DNM	ACC	T		DN M	ACC	T	DNM	ACC	T
Oral Presentation in Culture classes in Spanish	2	25	10	2	8	10	3	5	7	Data not available	2	11	8	5	11	9
Oral Presentation in Culture classes in Italian	0	9	2	0	1	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	Data not available	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Oral Presentation in Culture classes in French	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	2	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	Data not available	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	9	2
Oral Presentation in Culture classes in German	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0	1	Data not available	0	4	0	0	0	1

## **2.4. Outcome #4**: Discussion of Literary authors in Target Language

The Department uses Written Essays in literature classes to assess this outcome. These assessments are evaluated by means of rubrics designed by the Department and keyed to National Standards. The majority of students performed at either the acceptable or the target level.

The rubric associated with this outcome can be found in the attached Assessment plan, Appendix D, pages 18-19.

Outcome	Sp	ring 201	6	Fa	all 2015		Sp	ring 201	5	I	Fall 2014		Spring 2014		
Literature knowledge	DNM	ACC	T	DNM	ACC	T	DNM	ACC	T	DNM	ACC	T	DNM ACC		T
Essays in Spanish	5	23	13	due to c Sch. of and cha	Data not collected due to closure of Sch. of Ed. database and change in information system Data not collected			10	11	6	9	10	1	5	5
Essays in Italian	N/A	N/A	N/A	due to c Sch. of and cha				4	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	Not offered		d
Essays in French	N/A	N/A	N/A	due to c Sch. of and cha	Data not collected due to closure of Sch. of Ed. database and change in information system			N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A			lable
Essays in German	Not offe	ered		Data not collected due to closure of Sch. of Ed. database and change in information system			N/A	N/A	N/A	N	ot offered	d	No	ot offere	d

Outcome	F	all 2013		Sp	ring 201	.3	Fall 2012			Spring 2012	F	all 2011		Spring 2011		
Literature knowledg e	DN M	AC C	Т	DN M	AC C	Т	DN M	AC C	Т		DN M	AC C	Т	DN M	AC C	T
Essays in Spanish	1	10	0	9	12	14	3	16	10	Data not availabl e	4	21	9	4	17	8
Essays in Italian	0	2	0	N/A	N/A	N/ A	N/A	N/A	N/ A	Data not availabl e	0	5	0	N/A	N/A	N/ A
Essays in French	N/A	N/A	N/ A							Data not availabl e	0	9	1	N/A	N/A	N/ A
Essays in German	N/A	N/A	N/ A	N/A	N/A	N/ A	0	0	1	Data not availabl e	N/A	N/A	N/ A	0	3	2

DNM = Do not meet; ACC = Acceptable; T = Target

### Section 3) Analysis

The Department has significantly expanded data collection in recent years. However, the information about student performance is still partial, especially in German and French. We do not have a full-time faculty member in German, which makes it difficult to offer advanced courses and collect data on them. Our full-time instructor in French has been hired only last year, and is starting to collect assessment data this year. We have created standardized instruments across languages, and developed common rubrics. We made cycling changes to the literature courses offered in Italian, German, and French so that at least one literature course in the target language is offered each academic year. Unfortunately, some semesters we don't have enough enrolment in these courses to allow us to make judicious comments. In general, the majority of students perform at either the acceptable or the target level, a result that has not changed significantly over time. However, not all data was submitted or available. In the Fall 2015 semester, data was not collected due to the closure of the database maintained by the School of Education and the change in the information system previously used.

Also in the case of data collected for *the oral* and *writing assessment* learning outcome, results show that the majority of our students have performed at either the acceptable or the target levels, although only a minority of them performs at the target level. Numbers of students who do not meet the requirement are consistently smaller than the rest.

Students at the acceptable level of *oral performance* show the following strengths: demonstrate some capacity to narrate and describe in major timeframes using connected discourse of paragraph length; perform successfully in many uncomplicated tasks requiring an exchange of basic information; show evidence of control of syntax in non-complex sentences. Areas of improvement at this level include their ability to consistently narrate and describe in major timeframes using well organized paragraphs; to be understood by listeners not used to interacting with non-native speakers, and to use rich and varied vocabulary.

Students at the acceptable level of *writing performance* show ability to write compositions in a well-integrated text presenting the most relevant points with good paragraph organization. Adequate evidence of understanding of complex syntax is one main area that needs improvement.

The chart including data for the *culture assessment* in the target languages shows that most of the Modern Language students fulfill the stated learning outcomes at either the acceptable or the target level. The strengths of these students include their ability to give a presentation that summarizes the main arguments with clarity and adequate formality; developing the topic thoroughly within the specified length of time; answering questions from both the instructor and other classmates accurately; and discussing the target culture making some comparisons to his/her own culture. Areas of improvement for students in this category include their ability to give a presentation that goes beyond the summary of main points and that includes a well supported personal opinion; their capacity to treat the topic reflecting a wider, stronger and more accurate knowledge base that also gives evidence of student's familiarity with cultural products, practices and perspectives that pose significant questions or that illustrate cultural changes; their ability to provide critical interpretations or comparisons; and their ability to present using well connected sentences that are clearly organized in a paragraph format.

As shown in the chart above, the majority of students taking Spanish and Italian *literature courses* are at either the acceptable or the target level. Their strength is their ability to write essays in a well integrated text presenting the most relevant points with good paragraph organization; identifying themes, genre and style correctly; correlating the literary work with its social and political context. Areas of improvement for students in this category include their ability to support arguments with relevant evidence and documentation, inclusion of pertinent sources and appropriate documentation through parenthetical citations.

#### Section 4) Use of results

The introduction of Assessment practices in the Department has been a progressive endeavor. We have been changing course cycling and pre-requisites for some courses, in order to provide students with more opportunities to use acquired knowledge and language skills in a better-coordinated and flexible fashion. Occasionally, individual instructors have adjusted their course's design and/or instructional resources, in order to better align teaching practices with objectives and assessment. We have also started offering some literature courses online.

The Department has introduced curricular changes at the intermediate and advanced levels in German, Italian, Spanish, and French with the purpose of enhancing students' performances in oral and written skills, as well as in their knowledge of the cultures and literatures of the target languages. In particular, the main pre-requisite for all 300-level courses now includes two options rather than only one, and more courses can be taken concurrently. These changes give students the possibility to develop the ability to make connections between the content of different courses. For instance, students are able to practice their oral and/or speaking skills more often in the same semester, in a combination of courses focusing on language, culture and literature. We have also implemented cycling changes and expanded our options for the Minor in Modern Languages. The goal of these changes is to bring more students up to the target level in a reasonable amount of time.

### **Section 5) General Education**

The Department has established the Novice-High level in speaking as the skill that better represents the leaning outcome for General Education courses. This is the objective of second semester elementary courses numbered 112 in all languages offered. Students are also expected to acquire knowledge of Products, Practices and Perspectives in the target culture, as defined by the National Standards for the teaching of world languages.

### **Assessment of Learning Outcomes in General Education**

Outcome	S	pring 201	6		Fall 2015	•	Spring2015			Fall 2014			Spring 2014		
Novice High	DNM	ACC	T	DNM	ACC	T	DNM	ACC	T	DNM	ACC	T	DNM	ACC	T
in Speaking															
the Target															
Language					Not offered										
German	Data	not subm	itted	Not offered			Data	not subm	itted	No	t offered		1	6	4
Spanish	15	83	26	6	48	75	18	70	54	3	62	51	19	57	61
Italian	5	24	5	1	Not offered		9 29 2			4 11 6			9	8	4
French	Data	not subm	itted	Not offered			Data	not subm	itted	Not offered			8	7	5
Japanese	5	8	9	Not offered			6	19	8	Not offered			10	9	5
Chinese	1	2	4	Not offered			Data not submitted			Not offered			0	3	8

Outcome		Fall 2013	1	Spring 2013			Fall 2012			Spring 2012		Fall 2011	
Novice High in Speaking the Target Language	DNM	ACC	Т	DNM	ACC	Т	DNM	ACC	Т		DNM	ACC	Т
German	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	6	4	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Spanish	5	45	25	16	51	51	5	25	29	N/A	5	40	69
Italian	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	7	4	2	7	6	N/A	1	7	10
French	N/A	N/A	N/A	8	7	5	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Japanese	N/A	N/A	N/A	7	12	3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Chinese	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	8	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

The data collected in Chinese, German, French, Japanese, Italian and Spanish 112 sessions show that the majority of the students do meet the expected level of proficiency at either the Target or Acceptable levels. An improvement will be future extending data collection to all other languages offered at the 112 level, although they are mostly taught by part-time faculty members, in American Sign Language, Arabic, Latin and Polish. Additional 112 courses taught by part-time members in Spanish and Italian will be included, as well. Moreover, as part of our plans to expand assessment of the courses we offer, the department has started to work on identifying learning outcomes for the Humanities courses offered regularly as part of students' completion of Gen Ed requirements. We expect to create rubrics and assess these courses by next cycle.

Students who fulfill this learning outcome are able to communicate in the target language in a basic way, using simple sentences and some strings of sentences. Their vocabulary conveys general information on themselves and everyday situations. They are understood by those accustomed to the speaking of language learners.

The Department uses Oral Interviews in second-semester classes to assess this outcome. These assessments are evaluated by means of rubrics designed by the Department and keyed to National Standards. The majority of students performed at either the acceptable or the target level, with no significant changes in percentages over the years. We have regularly used the results of oral performances to improve the interview format and preparation. In an effort to improve the teaching of General Education courses, we have introduced online workbooks that expand the availability of tutorials and trial tests and can be accessed from off campus over the internet. Please note that only Spanish 112 is offered in the fall semesters, while all languages offer it in spring due to enrollment and cycling constraints.

The rubric associated with this outcome can be found in the attached Assessment plan, Appendix A, page 9.

### Section 6.) Assessment Plan

The Assessment Plan adopted by the Department of Modern Languages is attached to this Report in a separate document.

A detailed and comprehensive Assessment Plan was developed by the Department in 2008 and revised in 2009. Since then, it has been implemented in all related courses and programs, and systematically used yearly. It has proven to be highly effective for teaching and assessing language courses, since it applies both the results of research in the field and ACTFL National Standards. Faculty members have referred to such a plan for any changes needed to their teaching style, instructional materials and expectations. On the other side, many questions arise in the Department about the need for Interim Assessment Reports and for this lengthy Full Assessment Report. In fact, while we continue to assess students' performance yearly anyway, we have a large number of programs, some of which have few students in a given year, producing no meaningful information. Therefore, the Department proposed an alternate reporting plan to the Academic Assessment Committee, first proposed by Prof. Mejía at a meeting of the Faculty Senate. The proposal has been rejected. The attached Assessment Plan and rubrics keyed to national standards should be enough proof that the Department is both knowledgeable and active in Assessment. We are aware that it is our obligation to address the challenges of data collections in under-enrolled courses and in courses taught by part-time faculty members, but we do not see how the burden of reporting is going to be part of the solution, since improving the implementation of our assessment plan is already one of our Department's main responsibilities.