Department/Program: World Languages/French B.A.  Date of Report: 9/20/2013

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Please refer to expanded instructions for each item. The narrative portion of the report should not exceed four pages. Appendices should be included as part of the report.

1. Overview and Context:

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3. Assessment Data:

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1. Overview and Context:

In accordance with our current course/PLO matrix, the following Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) in conjunction with the following Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) were assessed in 2012-2013 in the following courses.

In French 101C (Fall 2012):

SLO 3: Language & Communication. Oral Expression. Demonstrate advanced (ACTFL) skills in speaking French. (C/D) [newly revised]
SLO 4: Language & Communication. Listening Comprehension. Demonstrate advanced (ACTFL) skills in understanding French. [newly revised]

In French 140B (Fall 2012):

SLO 5: Literacy: Use appropriate terminology in linguistic, cultural, or literary analysis. [newly revised]

In French 101B (Spring 2013):

SLO 1: Language & Communication. Written Expression. Demonstrate advanced (ACTFL) skills in writing French. [newly revised]
SLO 2: Language & Communication. Reading Comprehension. Demonstrate advanced (ACTFL) skills in reading French. [newly revised]

In French 132 (Spring 2013):

SLO 4: Language & Communication. Listening Comprehension. Demonstrate advanced (ACTFL) skills in understanding French. [newly revised]
SLO 5: Literacy: Use appropriate terminology in linguistic, cultural, or literary analysis. [newly revised]

In French 160 (Spring 2013):

SLO 6: Cultural Analysis and Comparison: Analyze and compare a wide variety of texts drawing upon their cultural knowledge of France and the Francophone world. [newly revised]
SLO 8: Demonstrate advanced ability to connect with other disciplines and language communities. Demonstrate advanced translation skills. [newly revised]
SLO 9: Technology: Demonstrate information processing competency, use of appropriate technologies and tools for research, analysis, communication, and presentation. [newly revised]

The wording of the French B.A. SLOs was revised slightly to make them more proactive in demonstrating what the students would be able to accomplish and how they would meet the PLO and SLO objectives. They were more clearly spelled out with distinct and
measurable standardized outcomes designed on a course by course basis following a logical progression in accordance with the course by course French B.A. assessment roadmap. SLOS 1 through 4 are tied closely and directly to language proficiency based on the French WebCape (Computer Adaptive Placement Exam) results and as determined as well by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and the TEF guidelines based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFRL) following a logical progression for each of the four language skills: writing, reading, speaking and understanding. Every course in the French B.A. Program clearly identifies and assesses the students' progress in these key knowledge and skill areas by providing appropriate objective and measurable benchmarks or minimum thresholds course by course at the beginning and end of the semester in order to assess the students' proficiency level as they progress through the language sequence (see WebCape results in appendix). For the less language-based French courses focusing more on SLOs 5 through 9, such as the culture and literature courses, the student learning outcomes focus and are based on more specialized, disciplinary knowledge and content. For example, in the culture classes, students need to demonstrate competence in a wide range of disciplines and perspectives relating to French and Francophone culture including but not limited to history, geography, literature, anthropology, sociology, political science, economics, folklore, music, fine and folk arts and dance in accordance with the course by course French B.A. assessment roadmap. Assessment data collected and analyzed highlights, however, certain weaknesses in the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) which do not always meet the overall Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) to satisfy required core student competencies (see below).

2. Use of Prior Assessment/Closing the Loop:

There has been an identifiable and highlighted need across the B.A. curricula to focus more on vocabulary building exercises, more frequent reading and listening comprehension exercises and testing by incorporating more vocabulary, reading and listening comprehension questions into the classroom activities and tests along with the testing of their knowledge of French grammar. For example, in the 101 course sequence, the students’ weakness in the areas mentioned above is clearly observable and measurable. As a result of the need for a more clearly defined and objective means of determining their language proficiency, the internationally recognized TEF (Test d'Évaluation du français) used, for example, by Canadian Immigration, French Universities and for work to assess “comprehension and expression skills in French” by giving “a quantitative and qualitative measure of the level of candidate’s linguistic and communication skills” and offering “a detailed and personalized analysis of the results”1 has been implemented as of Spring 2011 in the course curricula as early as the second-year intermediate level course sequence and is an effective assessment tool for the proficiency-based language courses and an important component of the students’ overall course grade. Given this is a long-term process, the determination of the effectiveness of this crucial assessment tool will be on-going through the Spring 2014 semester.

1 http://www.fiaf.org/frenchclasses/frenchexam-tef.shtml#what
A common grading rubric for all B.A. courses used by all French instructors has been developed and implemented as of Fall 2011 as a means of ensuring a more standardized level of proficiency, more clearly defined expectations with regard to the overall program and specific course learning objectives and greater fairness in grading. In addition, more clearly defined criteria and guidelines for written assignments and oral presentations have been implemented as of Fall 2011 and will appear in all future undergraduate green sheets, in Desire2Learn and now in Canvas (see also newly revised SLOs on Department and UGS website). The rubric is based on the following grading criteria for courses requiring a research-based writing assignment:

- **30%** Content: Quality and accuracy/reliability of information, sufficient number of examples to support reasoning and conclusions; critical thinking skills
- **30%** Organization (clear and precise introduction, development paragraphs, conclusion, and logical progression of ideas)
- **20%** Compliance with MLA style guidelines
- **20%** Grammar, spelling, style

For courses which do not require a research-based writing assignment, the grading criteria is as follows:

- **40%** Content: Quality and accuracy/reliability of information, sufficient number of examples to support reasoning and conclusions; critical thinking skills
- **40%** Organization (clear and precise introduction, development paragraphs, conclusion, and logical progression of ideas)
- **20%** Grammar, spelling, style

The assessment data also points to the need at the program level for students to further develop their information literacy and to learn how to properly document sources using an appropriate style guide, such as MLA. Students need to become more proficient and savvy at using internet and non-internet sources for the purpose of scholarly research. This new focus is clearly articulated in the grading rubric above for research-based writing assignments and will also be closely monitored by the French faculty for its overall effectiveness and impact on the program learning objectives in the short term as of Fall 2012 and adjusted, if necessary, in the longer term up until Spring 2014.

This is especially true when students are asked to articulate or demonstrate the interrelatedness of knowledge between French courses, such as in culture and literature, by building on the body of knowledge which they have acquired in previous French courses and other university courses for that matter and by making the appropriate connections and drawing the necessary conclusions.

The students’ progress in this key area will be closely monitored as of Fall 2012 and will be adjusted accordingly through the Spring 2014 timeline. In addition, as of Fall 2012, a statement about the Program Learning Outcomes of the French Program will appear in all course syllabi calendars as a discussion item for the first day of instruction.
3. **Assessment Data:**

As a means of assessing PLOs and SLOs 1 through 4 in French 101B and 101C, in addition to the analysis of computerized placement exam scores at the beginning and at the end of the respective semester (see data in appendix), the most significant and beneficial modification made to French 101C in Fall 2012 was the addition of TEF training exercises as class activities, mid-semester and final tests. Demonstration of listening comprehension at the advanced levels (ACTFL advanced low and superior, and CEFRL C1-C2) were set as 30% of the course grade. Specific listening comprehension tests/activities were developed in order to evaluate this SLO. Data was collected in the form of oral tests conducted in class during the last four weeks of the semester. This activity was presented to the students as training for the final exam, which included oral questions given in dictation. In this part of the tests, based on 14 students, 11 placed as Advanced High and Superior (ACTFL) or B2 (CEFRL)\(^2\) in listening comprehension. This is the desired level for an advanced class. Three students scored at novice level (A1 or 0+) which is much too low for this class. The second type of test consisted of multiple-choice questions on oral samples in formats and on topics not familiar to the students: public announcements, advertisings, voicemail messages, excerpts from radio news, interviews, etc. The first two rounds of this type of test can be considered as training since for most students this was completely new. In addition to oral proficiency interviews for all French 101C students, French majors should be encouraged to take the TEF exam in Spring 2014. Expected scores should range between 600 (B2) and 900 (C2).

In French 101B, vocabulary building exercises, more frequent reading and listening comprehension exercises and testing by incorporating more vocabulary, reading and listening comprehension questions into the classroom activities and tests along with the testing of their knowledge of French grammar were implemented. More emphasis was placed on translation to compare English and French grammatical structures in support of SLO 1 and SLO 2. Data in the form of improved scores on exercises, quizzes, tests and writing assignments from prior semesters suggests that this new focus or emphasis has been successful (see appendix).

French 101B assessment data for translation and reading exercises (SLO 1 & 2) were the following:

2 students received A-; 4 students B+; 5 students B; 2 students B-; 1 student C; 1 student F

French 101B assessment data for vocabulary exercises (SLO 1 & 2) were the following:

3 students received A; 1 student A-; 2 students B+; 3 students B; 3 students B-; 1 student C-; 2 students F

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\(^2\) Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.
French 101B assessment data for written expression exercises (SLO 1 & 2) were the following:

2 students received A; 3 students B; 1 student B-; 2 students C; 1 student C-; 1 student D+; 2 students D; 3 students F

French 140B: French Literature and the Arts in the XXth et XXIst centuries- (Fall 2012)

This seminar is an advanced survey course taught in French in reading, studying and analyzing the literary and artistic movements starting at the beginning of the XXth century to our day.

The following SLO was assessed for this seminar:

SLO 5: Literacy: Use appropriate terminology in linguistic, cultural or literary analysis

This course emphasized the historical, socio-economical, cultural context of our modern period and its connection and lasting impact on French literature and the arts (e.g. cubism, dada surrealism, existentialism, nouveau roman, oulipo and more…) Students learned how to present, on a weekly basis, through quizzes or collective discussions in class critical opinions and how to express ideas (based on their readings) with clarity, coherence, using proper terminology at an advanced level of proficiency in French. In addition, they practiced essay writing, analysis of various topics, how to design an outline for their term research paper and oral presentation; they had to become familiar and use the methodology, technique and language of argumentation, quotations, bibliography, references, footnotes, etc. Finally, students had learn and apply MLA guidelines for the presentation of their research papers.

Literacy was not the easiest part of the class- It is strongly recommended that students take Foreign Language 100W or 200W (for graduate students) before or concurrently with their advanced courses in French to become familiar with research practices and with the use of appropriate terminology in linguistic, cultural and especially literary analysis.

9 students (mainly graduate students) did well with SLO 5. Out of the remaining 9 other students, 4 obtained satisfactory results, 3 barely made it and 2 failed.

In French 132 Business French (Spring 2013)

The following SLOs were assessed for this class

SLO 4: Language & Communication. Listening Comprehension. Demonstrate advanced (ACTFL) skills in understanding French.
Language and communication (both written and oral) in the Business French course were one of the major goals and outcomes for this class in order to pass the DFA1 (Diplôme de Français des Affaires niveau 1), a prestigious international Business French diploma granted by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Paris. Students had to acquire business French terminology in order to communicate orally and perform business transactions in the target language. They also received intensive training to understand and translate business documents in French and respond in the target language to letters, emails, memos, and reports. They had to be able to communicate within a French speaking company and with the French company’s partners (retailers, banks, suppliers, clients, etc.). To improve their listening comprehension, students watched each week short video clips on French channel TV5.org on topics concerning the economy. They were tested on the content of the video clips on a weekly basis.

These communicative skills were tested in all of our sessions. Most of our courses in the French BA program do not teach specific terminology in business. The early part of the course represented quite a challenge for most students in the class, but their fluency improved as the course unfolded. These language and communication skills were tested in the majority or our class activities: weekly quizzes - two projects (creating their own paper company) - midterms, oral presentations, final exam and portfolio.

9 students received commendable to satisfactory grades - 5 students received satisfactory to passing grades - 2 students failed.

**SLO 5: Literacy: Use appropriate terminology in linguistic, cultural, or literary analysis.**

Using appropriate terminology for this class was essential to pass the class and succeed on the Chamber of Commerce exam. It was an arduous task but after some resistance at the beginning of the course students acquired the appropriate terminology in business to communicate and perform transactions in French.

The business French course required a good knowledge of French business culture and practices to be acquainted with France’s main institutions, such as its banks, stock market, etc….understand systems such as transportation, taxes, insurance, etc. Students had to be familiar with the different types of French companies and how they function and have some general knowledge of France, its economy and its importance within the European Union and with other world partners.

SLO 5 was tested in quizzes, midterms and final exams as well as the preparation for the Chamber of Commerce exam at the end of the semester.

9 students received commendable to satisfactory grades - 5 students received satisfactory to passing grades - 2 students failed.
The following SLOs were assessed for this seminar:

**SLO 6: Cultural Analysis and Comparison:** Analyze and compare a wide variety of texts drawing upon their cultural knowledge of France and the Francophone world.

In our seminar, we studied and analyzed how the events of the French Revolution and the empire of Napoleon I, through their massacres and great loss of human life during the empire’s wars, had a considerable impact on the development of the literary (and artistic) fantastic genre in the early period of the Romantic movement. Throughout the centuries, the fantastic genre expressed the traumatic inner troubles, anguish of the writers and artists closely related to historical events. Examples are many through the fairy tales of Perrault, to the tales of Nodier, Gautier, Maupassant all the way to contemporary writer Michel Tournier with the *Roi des Aulnes* inspired by a tale from Goethe. In this book, Tournier shows the impact of fascism in France and the nazi movement on his main character and the killing of brain washed young children at the end of WWII. This SLO was assessed in most of our written and oral activities in weekly quizzes and readings, oral presentations, midterm and final exam, and the research term paper.

**SLO 8: Connections to Other Disciplines and Languages Communities**
Students demonstrated their connections to other disciplines by reading the work of world-renowned critic T. Todorov, Gaston Bachelard and Bruno Bettelheim, S. Freud and Karl Jung (for psychoanalysis). They also demonstrated their knowledge of the art of Blake, Callot, Füssli and Goya in their presentations, term papers, and demonstrated their comprehension on quizzes and final exam on the fantastic.

**SLO 9: Technology: demonstrate information processing competency, use of appropriate technologies and tools for research, analysis, communication, and presentation**

Most students did well in their PowerPoint oral presentations. Their work was shared with the rest of the class on Canvas (our learning management system). A couple of students needed support to put their oral presentation on PPT. Most students did quite well in quoting their sources on the Internet and went beyond the use of Wikipedia. This SLO was assessed in the oral presentation and the research term paper.
Overall, even though the subject of the seminar was arduous, most students did well (with some difficulties to understand the book of Todorov and Bachelard) : 8 students did well- 5 students received a satisfactory grade -1 student failed.

4. **Alignment of Course and Program Learning Outcomes:**
See current course/PLO matrix in appendix

5. **Recommendations for Student Learning:**

Further attention will be given to improving the students’ performance in the weaknesses identified above and to developing more precise instruments and measures to evaluate the success of our students in meeting PLOs and SLOs at the course and program level. French majors will especially be encouraged to take the TEF exam in Spring 2014. Expected scores should range between 600 (B2) and 900 (C2). Furthermore, oral proficiency interviews will continue to be implemented in FREN 101C.

6. **Plans 2013-14 Academic Year:**

In accordance with the course/PLO matrix, the following Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) in conjunction with the following Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) will be assessed in 2013-2014 in the following courses.

**In French 160 (Fall 2013):**

SLO 5: Literacy: Use appropriate terminology in linguistic, cultural, or literary analysis.
SLO 6: Cultural Analysis and Comparison: Analyze and compare a wide variety of texts drawing upon their cultural knowledge of France and the Francophone world.
SLO 7: Literary and Cultural Texts and Traditions: Demonstrate knowledge of major periods, genres, authors, movements of French and Francophone cultural history.
SLO 8: Demonstrate advanced ability to connect with other disciplines and language communities. Demonstrate advanced translation skills.

**In French 120B (Spring 2014):**

SLO 5: Literacy: Use appropriate terminology in linguistic, cultural, or literary analysis.
SLO 7: Literary and Cultural Texts and Traditions: Demonstrate knowledge of major periods, genres, authors, movements of French and Francophone cultural history.
SLO 9: Technology: Demonstrate information processing competency, use of appropriate technologies and tools for research, analysis, communication, and presentation.