

Department of World Language Studies
Indiana University South Bend

ASSESSMENT PLAN

I. Educational Goals:

- a. At the completion of the major in French, German and Spanish our students should have reached the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) standard of “intermediate high” in reading, writing, listening comprehension, and speaking. This level corresponds to the Indiana Professional Standards Board’s requirement for Foreign Language teachers. Additionally, our majors will be well-versed in the culture and literature of the language they have studied.
- b. Students in CLAS who are required to take four semesters of a foreign language should attain an “intermediate low” by the ACTFL scale.
- c. All students taking language courses in our department will become acquainted with issues involving course-cultural communication, world geography, and have developed an appreciation for and sensitivity to people of different nationalities and ethnic backgrounds.

II. Methodologies for Measuring the Attainment of Educational Goals

- a. The Department has applied for a grant from “Information Technologies Funding” to purchase a battery of high-quality, proficiency based assessment tools for reading, writing, listening and speaking. The Minnesota Language Proficiency Assessment (MLPA) Exam was developed through funding support from the U.S. Department of Education, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the University of Minnesota. The MLPA are currently available to test proficiency in reading, writing, listening comprehension and speaking at both the intermediate low and high levels.
- b. Both majors and minors would be required to complete a cultural portfolio. The department is in the process of reviewing our various practices in view of crafting a set of guidelines that would obtain across all languages. We have a committee currently working on these guidelines.
- c. We intend to develop a senior-level capstone course that would help students see the commonalities which unite them despite studying different languages.
- d. The department has developed an exit interview/questionnaire for graduating seniors to assess their experience in the department. (See attached).

III. Process for Using Assessment Information

- a. The MLPA exams will afford us a wealth of data on both our four semester-language sequence and on the skill level obtained by our majors and minors. The results will help guide our course design, textbook choices, and use of various methodologies.

- b. With the papers that students submit for their portfolio projects and capstone courses, we will be able to determine if students are truly grasping the critical issues of comparative cultural analysis, possess an adequate understanding of world geography, and have come to appreciate national and ethnic differences.
- c. Results from the exit interview will allow us to have a better sense of the student's experience of the program. We would use the data pro-actively to make improvement and adjustments where necessary.

IV. Participation of all constituencies

All full-time members of the department have participated in crafting the above-mentioned plan. Two of our members (Cheri Brown and Tammy Morgan) have served on the assessment committee and have shared their expertise with the rest of us. We need to work on encouraging greater participation on the behalf of our majors and alumni in this process. To that end, we are developing a Newsletter and generating a list of alumni to whom we can address these efforts.

V. Records

The Department of World Language Studies keeps an archive of student portfolios, student surveys, and other assessment data, including assessment reports, on file in the department office. Copies of this plan will be placed on the department "H" drive.