Department:  Modern and Classical Languages

GUR Competency Assessment Report

Thank you for supporting the assessment of our GUR program. Please provide information about how your department/unit assessed student work toward your selected GUR competency by responding to the following prompts.

1  Department
   Modern and Classical Languages

2  Assessment Coordinator(s): Who is responsible for coordinating assessment in your department/unit
   Paqui Paredes

3  GUR Competency Being Evaluated (GUR competencies here).
   Competency 1 - Analyze and communicate ideas effectively in oral, written, and visual forms.

4  Please describe the performance(s) used to assess student outcomes toward the GUR competency (performances could include term papers, pre-post exams, presentations, etc.).
   In Spanish 104, students were given three assessments: 1) A pre-/post- Computer Adaptive Placement Exam, 2) A pre-/post- set of communicative reactions to different scenarios to which students should have the linguistic capabilities to handle effectively in Spanish after taking 104, and 3) an essay in which students gave advice based on material they read (This required them to use all of the verb tenses that they had studied during the quarter, requiring that they communicate in the past (preterite and imperfect) and that they use the subjunctive.

5  Please describe how you analyzed those student performances.
   Faculty examined the placement scores individually and as an aggregate; overall, placement scores rose from an average of 313.6 in Week 1 to 339.5 in Week 10. The significant improvement noted in the standardized exam speaks to the general effectiveness of the course in terms of improving the communicative skills of the students. While the improvement is significant, the first score is skewed high by students who should have gone directly to Spanish 201. Six students scored slightly lower in Week 10, and they all had scored rather high the first time. Apart from the placement exam, faculty read 30 sets of communicative reactions to scenarios and
noted areas of strength and weakness; faculty read 30 essays for clarity, pertinence of the advice, and quality of the written Spanish.

6 Using the categories from the appropriate GUR competency rubric, describe your assessment of students’ performance toward that competency. For example, for Competency #1 you should address contextual knowledge, focused development, organization, and conventions.

Contextual knowledge: Students showed an ability to express basic needs and wishes clearly, as well as to comment appropriately on the weather, and to questions about family, work, and hobbies. As the information requested specifically sought to unmask their weaknesses, it was no surprise that a small percentage of students had vocabulary gaps and/or a lower ability to give complete responses to the scenarios posed. There was improvement from the Week 3 assessment to the week 9 assessment in this regard. Regarding the essay, students showed an ability to provide appropriate advice using the subjunctive, a key element in being able to handle more sophisticated and abstract scenarios, though some were able to create context more thoroughly than others.

Focused Development: On the essay, students frequently created a strong basis for the advice they gave, using logic and justification for the advice given. Some students, whose Spanish had not progressed as well as it could have, were more basic in their responses.

Organization: The progression of ideas nearly always followed the expected structure of the type of assignment given, in that they described the problem being addressed, examined the behavior of the advisee, and provided concrete examples of improved behavior leading to the advisee’s success.

Conventions: Student grammar showed some failings, especially in material not discussed at this early level of Spanish, such as the usage of prepositions. Two key elements, the use of two-clause structure and the conjugation of verbs were generally good, which indicates readiness to proceed to the 200 level of Spanish.

7 Did you add any assessment criteria for this competency beyond those listed on the rubric? If yes, please describe here.

Yes. We added a language proficiency criteria. SPAN 104 is a communication GUR and the focus of the course is indeed to analyze and communicate ideas effectively in oral and written form. However, since the focus of the course is to communicate ideas effectively in Spanish, and the abilities of the students at this level are very limited, we saw as a necessary step in this assessment of the students’ communicative competence the addition of a language
proficiency criteria that would establish reasonable expectations in terms of language usage at this point of the students’ language study (104 is an accelerated review of the 1st year grammar. By the end of the course, students will have similar communicative abilities to those students who have completed one year of college-level Spanish language studies).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language proficiency</th>
<th>Capstone 4 (Exceeds GUR standard)</th>
<th>Milestone 3 (Meets GUR standard)</th>
<th>Milestone 2</th>
<th>Benchmark 1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shows awareness of verb conjugation in terms of tense, mood, and agreement, and is able of appropriate and consistent contextual use.</td>
<td>Shows awareness of verb conjugation in terms of tense, mood, and agreement, and is able of appropriate contextual use with some consistency.</td>
<td>Shows awareness of verb conjugation in terms of tense, mood, and agreement, but is unable of appropriate and consistent contextual use.</td>
<td>Demonstrates minimal attention to consistent verb conjugation and appropriate contextual use in terms of tense, mood, and agreement.</td>
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If you answered yes for (7), describe your assessment of students’ performance toward these additional criteria.

Threshold concepts on which Spanish 104 focuses include noun-adjective agreement and the accuracy of verb conjugation, both in terms of tense/mood and in terms of subject/verb agreement. The assessment assignments focused on those concepts, and as they are right/wrong concepts, it was very clear who had progressed, and who had not.

8 As you consider your data, what would be appropriate next steps to improve students’ performance toward the selected GUR competency? Please indicate any professional development resources that would help you support students’ progress toward the selected GUR competency.

Students used their English-language organizational skills to good advantage in these exercises, though some showed less ability to organize ideas than would be desired. A Spanish 104 instructor has been designing a verb system program that would provide students with an opportunity to focus on that aspect of Spanish. Collaboration with someone in Computer Science could move the project along more quickly.

Departmental Assessment:
Section: FRENCH

Assessment Coordinator: Christina Keppie

Program Outcomes:

A. Linguistic Skills
   1. Students will be able to converse with native and/or native-like speakers from French/Francophone cultures and to discuss both academic (linguistics, literary, cultural) and every day topics in a variety of settings using phonetically-accurate, syntactically-complex, and lexically appropriate language.
   2. Students will be able to write convincingly and critically on every day, academic, and semi-professional topics in French, using a variety of formats, complex syntax, and appropriate lexical choices.
   3. Students will understand the natural speech patterns of speakers of the French language in a variety of formats and on various non-technical topics.
   4. Students will be able to read, analyze, and interpret - both from a linguistic and a literary/cultural perspective - written texts in a variety of styles from the past and the present.

B. Cultural Knowledge
   5. Students will have a general grasp of the geographical, historical, social, and political dimensions of French/Francophone cultures.
   6. Students will understand the relevance of literary production and/or theory/methodology to understand the different cultures of the Francophone world.
   7. Students will understand the linguistic variety of regional/national usages within French/Francophone cultures as well as the complexity of advanced grammatical structures and concepts in the French language.
   8. Students will be able to use appropriate resources to conduct research on literary, linguistic, and cultural topics.

C. Global Awareness
   9. Students will be able to compare/contrast the linguistic features of the French language with American English.
   10. Students will be able to compare/contrast French/Francophone literary and cultural perspectives with their own.
   11. Students will be able to compare/contrast French/Francophone cultural identities with their own.
Student Learning Outcomes Assessed This Year:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Measures</th>
<th>SLOs Assessed</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use of the Indirect Discourse in FR 302 through homework assignments, exams.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Most students (75%) are able to appropriately switch a sentence from the direct discourse to using the indirect discourse if the sentence is a stand-alone, such as in homework assignments. Many students (at least 50%) have difficulty when attempting to do the same switch with a (short) literary text. Students have difficulty knowing when to use/not use quotation marks, which are the appropriate tenses, and correct transition expressions.</td>
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Example(s) of Changes Based on Assessment

All section members have agreed that since FR 203 is very grammar intense, with little time to really dedicate to the use of the indirect discourse (to the level that it really deserves), that more attention will be given in FR 301 and FR 302 where the focus will be primarily on switching from direct to indirect in stand-alone sentences. Short literary texts are introduced in the new FR 397 course, the introduction to literary analysis course, where the focus will be on reporting, which requires the use of the indirect discourse. This will allow students to grow in their ability to use the forms before they reach the actual literature courses and upper-division 400-level courses, where last year’s assessment (FR 420 – 2012-2013) concluded that students had an “inability to transition easily from commentary to quotation and vice versa.”

Section: GERMAN

Assessment Coordinator: Shannon Dubenion-Smith

Program Outcomes:

1. Students can understand some extended speech on unfamiliar topics delivered through a variety of media.
2. Students can understand most spoken language and some technical discussions as well as some accents and dialects.
3. Students can communicate with a fair amount of fluency and spontaneity on familiar topics, even in complicated situations, can link ideas in extended discussions, and can participate actively in most informal and a few formal conversations.
4. Students can deliver a clear, organized presentation appropriate to the audience on a variety of topics.
5. Students can express ideas on a variety of topics in clear, organized texts and can adjust their writing for some audiences.
6. Students will have a general knowledge of the geographical, historical, social, cultural, and political dimensions and attributes of the German-speaking regions and nations.
7. Students will be able to understand and evaluate the assumptions, values, and beliefs of the diverse communities that constitute the German-speaking world and will, as a result, have an awareness of cultural differences derived from their study of the cultures and identities of the German-speaking nations.

Student Learning Outcomes Assessed This Year:

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<td>Linguafolio self assessment checklists (National Council of State Supervisors for Languages)</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 5</td>
<td>In German 202 (Intermediate German), students were required to fill out the Linguafolio self assessment checklists once at the beginning and once at the end of the quarter to measure their progress in 5 modes at the target level Intermediate Low: interpersonal communication, interpretative listening and reading, and presentational writing and speaking. While many students reported an improvement in interpersonal communication and interpretive listening and reading, and to a lesser degree presentational writing, the greatest need for improvement lay in the area of presentational speaking. According to numerous students, this was closely connected to a still limited vocabulary.</td>
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Proposed Changes Based on Assessment

The German section is currently in the process of choosing a new textbook for second-year German. Based on the German faculty’s own observations and the outcome of this year’s round of assessment, it will be important to pay close attention to the vocabulary-building aspect of the possible textbooks so we can better address our students’ needs in this area.
Before we adopt the new textbook in the 2015-2016 academic year, an intermediate step will be to integrate more speaking activities into our lessons in 201-203 during the 2014-2015 academic year.

Section: JAPANESE

Assessment Coordinator: Masanori Deguchi

Program Outcomes:

D. Linguistic Skills
1. Students will be able to converse with native or native-like Japanese speakers and discuss academic as well as everyday topics, using phonetically accurate and syntactically complex language in appropriate speech registers.
2. Students will be able to write convincingly and critically on academic as well as everyday topics in Japanese, using a variety of formats, complex syntax, and appropriate lexical choices, including appropriate kanji or Chinese characters.
3. Students will understand the natural speech patterns of Japanese in a variety of formats and on various non-technical topics.
4. Students will be able to read, analyze, and interpret written texts on academic and semi-professional topics in a variety of styles including accurate understanding of kanji.

E. Cultural Knowledge
5. Students will have a general grasp of the geographical, historical, social, and political dimensions of Japanese culture.
6. Students will understand the relevance of religion and literary production to understand Japanese culture.
7. Students will be aware of sociolinguistic variations of the Japanese language, such as dialectal and gender differences, and how they relate to Japanese culture.
8. Students will be able to use appropriate resources to conduct research on academic and semi-professional topics.

F. Global Awareness
9. Students will be able to compare and contrast the linguistic features of the Japanese language with those of American English.
10. Students will be able to compare and contrast the literary and cultural perspectives of Japanese speakers with their own.
11. Students will be able to compare and contrast the cultural identities of Japanese speakers with their own.
Student Learning Outcomes Assessed This Year:

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<td>Exams in Japn 104 and 203</td>
<td>2,4</td>
<td>An assessment test was given in Japn104 at the beginning of fall 2013, and another assessment test was given in Japn203 at the beginning of Spring 2014 in order to compare the students from the accelerated track [i.e., Japn104 → Japn201/202 → Japn203] and those from the regular track [i.e., taking from Japn101 up to Japn203] with respect to their performance in Japn203. Like last year, Japn104 students had difficulty in reading [accuracy of 51% in 2012 and 56% in 2013] and <em>kanji</em>, or the Chinese characters [accuracy of 32% in 2012 and 46% in 2013]. With respect to their performance in Japn203, those two tracks showed a very different picture this year compared to last year. First, while <em>kani</em> remains the hardest area for both tracks, those from the accelerated track fared better than those from the regular track this year [accuracy of 55% (accelerate) and 39%, (regular)]; however, last year, the students from the regular track did better than those from the accelerated track [accuracy of 69% (regular) and 23% (accelerated)]. Second, similarly, Japn203 students from the accelerated track performed better in grammar [e.g., conjugations, constructions] than those from the regular track this year [accuracy of 66% (accelerated) and 38% (regular)]. However, last year, those from the regular track outperformed those from the accelerated track [accuracy of 62% (regular) and 28% (accelerated)].</td>
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Example(s) of Changes Based on Assessment

The section may decide to change/lower the prerequisites for Japn104 in order to accurately reflect the average proficiency of students who took Japanese in high school as well as putting
more focus on *kanji* (and other areas that were identified problematic during this assessment, such as the reading skills) in Japn104.

Section: SPANISH

Assessment Coordinator: Hugo García

Program Outcomes:

G. Linguistic Skills
   1. Students will be able to converse with native and/or native-like Spanish speakers and to discuss both academic—linguistic, literary, cultural--and every-day topics in a variety of settings using phonetically accurate, syntactically-complex, and lexically appropriate language.
   2. Students will be able to write convincingly and critically on every-day, academic, and semi-professional topics in Spanish, using a variety of formats, complex syntax, and appropriate lexical choices.
   3. Students will understand the natural speech patterns of speakers of the language in a variety of formats and on various non-technical topics.
   4. Students will be able to read, analyze, and interpret—both from a linguistic and a literary/cultural perspective--written texts in a variety of styles from the past and the present.

H. Cultural Knowledge
   5. Students will have a general grasp of the geographical, historical, social, and political dimensions of Spanish-speaking cultures.
   6. Students will understand the relevance of literary production and theory to understand the different cultures of the Spanish-speaking world.
   7. Students will understand the linguistic variety of regional/national usages within Spanish-speaking cultures as well as the complexity of advanced grammatical structures and concepts in the Spanish language.
   8. Students will be able to use appropriate resources to conduct research on literary, linguistic, and cultural topics.

I. Global Awareness
   9. Students will be able to compare/contrast the linguistic features of the Spanish language with American English.
   10. Students will be able to compare/contrast the literary and cultural perspectives of the Spanish-speaking world with their own.
   11. Students will be able to compare/contrast the cultural identities of the Spanish-speaking world with their own.

Student Learning Outcomes Assessed:
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<td>Papers and presentations in Span 201, 202, 203, 301, and 302.</td>
<td>5, 6, 10</td>
<td>Analyzing papers and presentations in the grammar-focused classes at both the second and third year level, faculty noted a lack of general awareness on the part of the students in terms of basic historical, geographical, and literary knowledge of the Spanish-speaking world. Faculty also noted a lack of awareness in terms of the appropriate resources to conduct cultural research at that level. Spanish faculty determined that the current exposure that the students were receiving to historical, literary, and cultural material in general at the second year level was not sufficient, which was impairing students’ abilities for meaningful cultural analysis at the third year level. Faculty determined that the lack of emphasis of the current 2nd year textbook on culture in general and the lack of appropriate resources provided by the on-line system were key factors in explaining the deficiencies noted.</td>
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**Example(s) of Changes Based on Assessment**

Spanish faculty decided to undertake an in-depth examination of alternative 2nd year textbooks that would provide better cultural, historical, and literary readings for our students. Faculty also looked for programs with a strong on-line system that would provide students with additional materials and resources to facilitate cultural understanding and comparisons. After a three month evaluation and after meetings with multiple publishing houses, the faculty opted for abandoning *Avances* and adopting *Espacios*, a textbook with much stronger content in terms of culture and with a strong and user friendly on-line component.