Annual Academic Assessment Report Cover Sheet

Assessment reports are due the 1st Wednesday after the Fall Term

Email to: assessment@unlv.edu

Program Information:

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<th>Program Assessed</th>
<th>French Studies</th>
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<tr>
<td>Department</td>
<td>World Languages &amp; Cultures</td>
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<td>College</td>
<td>Liberal Arts</td>
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<td>Date Submitted</td>
<td>16 December 2015</td>
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Contact Person for This Report

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Please attach a narrative (not to exceed 4 pages, excluding appendices) addressing the following:

- What are the student learning outcomes? Please provide a numbered list.

1. Comprehension

   Listening in the Target Language
   Advanced level for the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) / C-1 (Proficient User – Common European Framework (CEF))
   At the Advanced level, listeners can understand the main ideas and most supporting details in connected discourse in the target language on a variety of general interest, literary and cultural topics.
   Direct assessment: course embedded assignments at the Advanced level, exams and papers. Assignments, assessments and grading rubrics are materials developed to meet the requirements of the Advanced (C-1) level.

   Reading in the Target Language
   Advanced (ACTFL) / C-1 (Proficient User – Common European Framework)
   At the Advanced level, readers can understand the main idea and supporting details of authentic literary and general informational texts in the target language.
   Direct assessment: course embedded assignments at the Advanced level, exams and papers. Assignments, assessments and grading rubrics are materials developed to meet the requirements of the Advanced (C-1) level.
2. **Production**

   **Speaking in the Target Language**
   Advanced (ACTFL) / C-1 (Proficient User – Common European Framework)
   Speakers at the Advanced level converse in a clearly participatory manner in order to communicate information, as well as literary and cultural topics.
   Speakers can express themselves easily in the major time frames of past, present and future of the target language.
   Direct assessment: Speaking competency will be assessed by means of an oral interview.

   **Writing in the Target Language**
   Advanced (ACTFL) / C-1 (Proficient User – Common European Framework)
   Writers can produce, clear, well-structured, detailed text in the target language on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
   Direct assessment: course embedded assignments, exams, papers, at the Advanced level. Assignments, assessments and grading rubrics are materials developed to meet the requirements of the Advanced (C-1) level.

3. **Critical Thinking in the Target Language**
   Students will be able to evaluate and interpret in the target language texts and other cultural phenomena including art, film and popular media and to decipher implicit meanings beyond the surface level of words, sentences, characters, and plots.
   (Source: http://romancelanguages.nd.edu/assessment/)
   Direct assessment: course embedded assignments, research papers at the Advanced (C-1) level.

4. **Cultural and Intercultural Knowledge in the Target Language**
   **Texts and Movements**
   Students will be able to identify major literary, artistic, and cultural figures of the target-language-speaking world and their principal works. They will be able to distinguish the principal characteristics of major trends, periods, and movements in the culture’s literary traditions. (Source: http://romancelanguages.nd.edu/assessment/)
   Direct assessment: course embedded assignments, research papers at the Advanced level.

   **Intercultural Competence**
   Students can identify and explain cultural differences between their own culture and that of the target culture(s). Students can conform linguistically and behaviorally in many social and work-related interactions. (Source: http://romancelanguages.nd.edu/assessment/)
   Direct assessment: course embedded assignments, research papers at the Advanced level.

- Which learning outcomes were assessed?

1. **Comprehension**
   **Listening in the Target Language**
   **Reading in the Target Language**
How were they assessed? (Programs must use at least one direct assessment of student learning.)

All FREN 300-400 level courses included embedded assignments which evaluate listening and reading comprehension. In 2015, there was offered a total of nine upper-division FREN courses:

**SP 2015:**
- FREN 302 Composition and Conversation II (18 students)
- FREN 313 Phonetics II (10 students)
- FREN 342 Survey of French Literature (17 students)
- FREN 425 Survey of French Culture – Culture gastronomique (20 students)

**SUM 2015:**
- FREN 324 Survey of French Culture (6 students)

**F 2015:**
- FREN 301 Composition and Conversation I (20 students)
- FREN 312 Phonetics I (14 students)
- FREN 401 Advanced Composition and Conversation I (10 students)
- FREN 443 From French Literature to Film (20 students)

All of these courses are taught in French and all assigned readings are in French so students must be sufficiently proficient in order to follow and to participate in the discussions.

FREN 301, 302, 312, 313, 401, 425 and 443 all have oral exams or presentations at the end of the semester. All students are responsible for the information given in the presentations, needing to incorporate it into subsequent discussions and test answers. FREN 342, 425 and 443 all have significant cultural and literary reading assignments. It is the review of these completed exams and papers and of the grades they earned which was considered for assessment.

Undergraduate programs should assess at least one University Undergraduate Learning Outcome (UULO) each year, which may or may not overlap with a program learning outcome.

The WLC Comprehension Outcome (Listening and Reading in the Target Language) addresses the following UULOs:
- Intellectual Breadth and Lifelong Learning
- Inquiry and Critical Thinking
- Communication
- Global/Multicultural Knowledge and Awareness

What was learned from the assessment results?
Students are particularly accomplished when listening to native and proficient speakers in film and dialogues. They can understand the vast majority of the information as well as reuse the same expressions in their own summaries or discussions. This is a reflection of the program’s lower-division program which integrates speaking and listening exercises and videos.

A significant cohort of students – that is, those earning Cs or lower in assignments - is less skilled in literary, rather than cultural, reading. FREN 342 and FREN 443 which both concentrate on literature, revealed lower grades for reading assignments due to a lack of understanding and specifically a misunderstanding of vocabulary. Students were reading quickly for information, rather than focusing on general meaning and hence their answers were overly general and too short. However, those students who had taken FREN 313 which focuses on the pronunciation and use of a higher register of vocabulary were more successful in the literature courses. Students of FREN 425, a culture class, were overwhelmingly close readers who gleaned from and presented well extended cultural readings.

- How did the program respond to what was learned?

The program concluded the following:

1) The current array of course offerings, particularly with the addition of the new course FREN 313, provide sufficient exposure to readings and dialogues for students to attain and maintain an Advanced/C-1 level of comprehension.

2) Students need sustained extended exposure to close readings. While short literary readings and analyses are presented in the 200-level cycle, they are less maintained in the early 300-level cycle. The FREN 301/302 sequence will use a new text book which better highlights reading strategies for literature starting Fall 2016.