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.

Improve Target Language (TL) language proficiency from level B-2 (Independent User - Vantage or Upper Intermediate) to level C-1 (Proficient User – Effective Operational Proficiency or Advanced) as described in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, corresponding to Advanced to Mid-Advanced High in ACTFL proficiency scales.

Students will achieve upper intermediate to advanced knowledge of their primary language (French, Italian, or Spanish) through a review and reinforcement of linguistic and communicative skills already acquired. At the same time, students will achieve a broader understanding of the target culture.

1. **Comprehension (Reception): Listening in the Target Language**

B-2: “Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialization.” C-1: “Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions.”

At the B-2 level the student can understand extended speech and lectures and follow complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar, can understand most TV news and current affairs programs, and can understand the majority of films in standard language (non-dialect). At the C-1 level the student can understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured
and when relationships are only implied and not signaled explicitly; can understand television programs and films without too much effort.

**Comprehension (Reception): Reading in the Target Language**

B-2: “Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation.” C-1: “Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognize implicit meaning.”

At the B-2 level the student can read articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular attitudes or viewpoints, and can understand contemporary literary prose. At the C-1 level students can understand long and complex factual and literary texts, appreciating distinctions of style, can understand specialized articles and longer technical instructions, even when they do not relate to his/her field.

**Production: Speaking in the Target Language**

B-2: “Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party.” C-1: “Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes.”

At the B-2 level the student can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to his/her field of interest, can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options. At the C-1 level the student can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.

**Production: Writing in the Target Language**

B-2: “Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.” C-1: “Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.”

At the B-2 level the student can write clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects related to his/her interests, can write an essay or report, passing on information or giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view. At the C-1 level the student can express himself/herself in clear, well-structured text, expressing points of view at some length, can write detailed expositions of complex subjects in an essay or a report, underlining what he/she considers to be the salient issues, can write different kinds of texts in a style appropriate to the reader in mind.

**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/](http://romancelanguages.nd.edu/assessment/)).

**4. Cultural and Intercultural Knowledge in the Target Language**
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/).

5. 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/).

- Which learning outcomes were assessed?
  
  1. Comprehension (Reception): Listening in the Target Language
  Comprehension (Reception): Reading in the Target Language
  
  2. Production: Writing in the Target Language
  Production: Speaking in the Target Language
  
  4. Cultural and Intercultural Knowledge in the Target Language

- How were they assessed? (Programs must use at least one direct assessment of student learning.)

Assessment of the UNLV Romance Languages degree program rotates between the primary language programs (French, Italian, and Spanish). The Italian program is highlighted for 2016. A total of five upper-division Italian courses were offered in 2016:

**SPRING 2016:**
ITAL 302 Third Year Italian - Composition and Conversation II (7 students)
ITAL 315 Italian Translation I (First Level) (2 students)

**SUMMER 2016:**
ITAL 322 Italian Popular Culture (5 students)

**FALL 2016:**
ITAL 301 Third Year Italian - Composition and Conversation I (4 students)
ITAL 490 Topics in Italian Studies (14 students)

With the exception of the two culture courses (ITAL 322 and ITAL 490), which are taught in English, the other Italian courses are taught entirely in the TL. All assigned exercises and readings are in Italian; therefore students must be proficient at the expected level in order to pass the course. The courses selected for this assessment were ITAL 301 and ITAL 302, with an expected proficiency level of B-2 and C-1 respectively. Both courses require presentations, compositions, and written exams during the semester, and a written exam at the end of the semester. ITAL 301 and ITAL 302, even though are grammar courses, have significant cultural and literary assignments. In particular, each course includes:

a) The study of 6 chapters from the textbook, covering vocabulary, grammar, compositions, written and oral comprehension (measured by 6 tests and a final exam);
b) 10 original compositions on assigned cultural or personal topics meant to foster students’ writing skills (morphology, syntax, and spelling); all compositions are required to be revised until they are in correct form;
c) 6 Web searches related to modern Italian culture, intended to foster reading, writing and speaking skills (students are required to deliver a written report and in-class oral presentation on each of them);
d) 3 in-class oral and written presentations based on as many Italian feature films.

Learning outcome 1 was assessed through embedded questions in the final exam and based on students’ grades. Learning outcome 2 was assessed through written compositions (film reports) and oral presentations (web searches) delivered during the semester. Learning outcome 4 was assessed through standardized questions in the afore-said compositions and presentations. Analysis concerned a total of 12 activities and exercises and utilized grading rubrics developed to meet the requirements of levels B-2 to C-1.

- 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.

Comprehension (Reception), Production, and Cultural knowledge in the Target Language address the following UULOs:

a) Inquiry and Critical Thinking
b) Communication
c) Global/Multicultural Knowledge and Awareness

a) ITAL 301 and ITAL 302 require students to express themselves at a fairly sophisticated level of Italian. Critical thinking is required for the interpretation of a wide range of texts and discourses, and for the correct construction of logical sentences based upon them. It is made clear to students early on in the courses that they will not be able to rely on memorization alone. A large part of the course is dedicated to making sure that students are equipped with the proper creativity and reasoning skills needed to effectively communicate in the TL. Students are called to produce their own sentences at the expected level in terms of: a) organizational patterns; b) use of supporting materials; c) clarity of message; d) consistency of topic with purpose.
b) Conversation is a main component of both courses. In each class students are frequently called on to express themselves—orally and in writing. Students are asked to sustain communication in the TL at the expected level in terms of: a) lexicon and language choices; b) pronunciation and delivery techniques; c) clarity of message; d) use of supporting materials.
c) Students are required to report on their assignments—readings of articles and literary passages; web searches; film viewings. Topics include education, society, music, economy, language, cuisine, sports, and politics, and are discussed in terms of comparative cultures (American/Italian).

- What was learned from the assessment results?

As to the three skills tested (comprehension, production, cultural knowledge), all students demonstrated general proficiency at the expected level, scoring above the 80% threshold in reading, writing, comprehension, and cultural understanding (see Appendix).

Data analysis reveals good general proficiency for both ITAL301 and ITAL 302 with no significant deviation from past assessments of the Italian program. The breaking down of language competency into separate components indicates that written comprehension and production is not on a par with oral comprehension. Students can understand most of the oral information given but cannot reproduce it at the same level in their own summaries and reports, written or oral. The discrepancy reflects a known phenomenon in language acquisition whereby passive competence is more easily achieved than active competence. This also explains the relatively lower score in cultural knowledge, where students may be able to grasp content but not to reproduce it with the same ease in the TL.
• How did the program respond to what was learned?

Given the encouraging scores no curricular changes were deemed necessary for third-year Italian. Changes, however, were made in lower-division courses through the adoption of a new textbook series, *The Italian Project*, with the goal of improving TL production and cultural knowledge.

The current textbook, *Ciao!*, mostly focuses on grammar exercises and is somewhat lacking in authentic reading materials and communication activities. Conversely, the new textbook series is richer in both. The curricular change affected Italian 113 in fall 2016. Curricular changes will eventually affect the other lower-division courses in the next two years as the old textbook will be phased out. A new assessment cycle of third-year Italian (in 2019) will determine whether the curricular change can bring improvements in TL production and cultural knowledge.

**APPENDIX**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% Final score</th>
<th>% Students scoring above 80</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ITAL 301</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>94.5</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. (Listening)</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. (Reading)</td>
<td>99.0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ITAL 302</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>91.6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. (Listening)</td>
<td>97.6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. (Reading)</td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cultural Knowledge</strong></td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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|                      |            |                            |
| **ITAL 301**         | 88.7       | 100                        |
| **ITAL 302**         | 85.0       | 100                        |

| Production           | 81.6       | 100                        |
| a. (Writing)         |            |                            |
| b. (Speaking)        | 80.4       | 100                        |

| Cultural Knowledge    | 85.0       | 100                        |

| Cumulative score      |            |                            |
| 1. Comprehension      | 93.0       | 100                        |
| 2. Production         | 82.2       | 100                        |
| 3. Cultural Knowledge | 84.1       | 100                        |