## Program Information:

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<th>Program Assessed</th>
<th>GERMAN STUDIES</th>
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<td>WORLD LANGUAGES AND CULTURES</td>
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<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>LIBERAL ARTS</td>
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<td>Department Chair</td>
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<td>RALPH BUECHLER</td>
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<td>Date Submitted</td>
<td>13 DECEMBER 2017</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 (SLO)? 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.

**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?**
  
  #3. Critical Thinking 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.)**

  The following German courses included embedded assignments and research papers that analyzed proficiency in Critical Thinking and in Cultural and Intercultural Knowledge.

  **SPRING 2017**
  
  GER 214 Intermediate German II
  GER 302 Composition and Conversation II
  GER 490 German Biography and Autobiography
FALL 2017

GER 213  Intermediate German I
GER 301  Composition and Conversation I
GER 425  German Culture from 1871 to the Present

In addition, at the beginning, middle and end of the semester the students were given 1) oral and 2) written exercises to demonstrate their ability and skill level in critical thinking and in their cultural and intercultural knowledge.

- **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 following UULOs were assessed by the WLC SLO Production (Speaking and Writing in the Target Language):

  - COMMUNICATION
  - INQUIRY AND CRITICAL THINKING
  - GLOBAL/MULTICULTURAL KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS

- **What was learned from the assessment results?**

The following points became evident through the assessment process as pertaining to the SLOs Critical Thinking and Cultural and Intercultural Knowledge in the Target Language:

- Proper placement of beginning students according to their skill levels and the adequate preparation of students for progression to the second-and third-year classes continue to be challenging but remains extremely important.
- The SLO of Critical Thinking and Cultural and Intercultural Knowledge in the Target Language cannot be uncoupled from the SLO of Comprehension (listening/reading) or the SLO of Production (speaking/writing); they must be used in relationship, each with the others.
- For students, the writing of shorter texts (eg. essays. short stories, poems, anecdotes, dialog, etc.) to internalize and express Critical Thinking and Cultural and Intercultural Knowledge appears to be most effective.
- Most challenging appears to be the comprehension and production of Critical Thinking and Cultural and Intercultural Knowledge. That is, whereas, the content (concepts, ideas, principles) of Critical Thinking and Cultural and Intercultural Knowledge brings with it its own inherent difficulties and challenges, these
challenges are amplified when said content is to be comprehended and produced within the context of a foreign language.

- Students appear to respond well in conversations with native speakers.
- Students find speaking more interesting and relevant if they are conversing with each other instead of with the instructor. (The challenge, of course, for the instructor, is to assure that the students do not fall back into English.)
- Students’ writing skills are best improved with immediate feedback and correction and subsequently with a repetition of the same text.
- Students prefer and often require as much repetition as possible.

- **How did the program respond to what was learned?**

  The program responded with a variety of strategies to the information garnered from the assessment process:

  - We continue to pay close attention to placement and progression so as to maximize the learning experience for the students. Beginning in the Fall 2017 a new Online Placement Test was implemented for all students requiring placement testing.
  - The new curricula and new textbook *Deutsch im Blick* (for the first 3 semesters of German) that were begun last year continue to be quite successful through its emphasis upon curricular every-day content and materials and its communicative approach.
  - We have decided to emphasize the use of interactive texts by asking one student to speak or read a text and asking other students to respond orally and/or in writing.
  - Instructors will emphasize the re-narrative of texts read to students, where they are asked to narrate (speaking or writing) in their own words what they have heard.
  - We will continue including more writing assignments where students’ essays are strategically corrected and then returned to the students for a re-write.
  - In Spring 2018 we will begin to use the new textbook and curricular packet *Kaleidoskop* for third-year German (GER 301 and 302). The current text *Mittendrin-Deutsche Sprache und Kultur für die Mittelstufe* has been found to be somewhat too general and abstract, while the new text appears to present material that will engage the students more directly and immediately in Critical Thinking and Cultural and Intercultural Knowledge.
  - We continue to read more texts aloud as the students simultaneously follow the written texts.
• We continue to find that the utilization of short videos, prepared with vocabulary and exercises, offer excellent opportunities for students to speak with each other and write about topics of interest to them.

• Additional use of guided oral group conversations, games and question-answer activities, particularly in pairs, has proven to be helpful and interesting for students.

• Students at a higher skill level in speaking and writing, particularly heritage speakers, will be encouraged and utilized to guide and mentor the other students.

• We continue to develop extra-classroom opportunities for students to expand and deepen their language skills (German Table, German Club, German Film Abend, etc.)

• So as to facilitate RPC for students who are off of the standard class rotation—ie, those students who will have begun with GER 114 in the fall semester—we have added an additional section GER 213 Intermediate German I for Spring 2018 and will hire and train an additional part-time instructor as needed.

• So as to offer to students more direct and tangible experiences, we have sought to expose them to various German cultural experiences in the Las Vegas area, eg, 1) we invited the owner and baker of the German Bread Bakery to talk on the history and culture of baking in Germany and how they hope continue these traditions through their bakery and their stores in Las Vegas; 2) students participated in an environmental workshop, including presentations by, among others, the Hamburg Ministry of Environment and Energy, the Ecologic Institute, Washington, DC, and the Consulate General of Germany and 3) the Honorary Consulate of Germany in Las Vegas sponsored a 500. Anniversary exhibit of the thought and work of Martin Luther.

• We will use this Assessment Report not so much as a form to fill out but as a work in progress that can guide the curriculum and the program to continuously examine, question and, where appropriate, amend the teaching and learning experience for students in the German Studies Program.