

Cleveland State University 2006 Assessment Report

Introduction for Report on French B.A. Program

The French B.A. program at Cleveland State University is a small program that generally attracts students preparing for teaching careers, those with interdisciplinary majors such as International Relations, or students preparing for international careers. Some of our French students are seeking post-secondary degrees, but we include them in our assessment data along with those earning a minor in French because our pool of majors is so small, and these students take many of the same courses as students earning a B.A. in French. Some of our students will go to graduate school in French or related disciplines. With two full-time faculty members and one part-time instructor, the French section is able to know its students quite well, making assessment much easier than with larger programs. We are also able to discuss improvements to our program on a regular and on-going basis.

Changes implemented in the French B.A. program as a result of 2005-2006 assessment activities include:

- Our department used an assessment grant to begin collecting information into a data base using scores generated by the Brigham Young placement test (CAPE). Faculty attended a workshop on how to interpret the test scores. Students also filled out a questionnaire about their experience taking the CAPE test. Compliance was difficult, and next year we plan to have students take the test as part of a class, instead of taking it outside of class. Data will eventually be graphed to track changes from level to level.
- Ongoing efforts to immerse students in French-speaking cultures to increase oral and cultural proficiency skills have been quite successful this year. One of our students is currently studying in Quebec. Another student, who taught English in Paris last year as part of the French government “poste d’assistant” program, met with interested students to discuss his experience. Two of our students have applied to teach English next year. Their applications were accepted and they were assigned to teach in Rouen and Nantes. We will invite the students who studied or taught abroad to share their experiences when they return next year. We also recruited seven students for our summer study abroad program

- Familiarity with Francophone culture, literature and film added to major goals. Francophone content is being incorporated into required courses, and we established a revolving schedule that will include Francophone topics as electives on a regular basis.
- We supplemented the rubric we developed for oral exams with “dynamic assessment” (DA) techniques for one-on-one oral testing. DA involves offering assistance or mediation during assessment in order to learn more about the person’s abilities and obtain a more comprehensive picture of what the student can and cannot do. DA provides immediate feedback and can be a more useful learning tool than a rubric alone.
- We revised our writing rubric to include more categories so that students receive feedback on the various components of the writing assignment.
- Related to our efforts to include opportunities for language students to improve their spoken proficiency, we explored models for establishing a residential language learning community in Fenn Tower. A proposal for a Arabic learning space was accepted and will be implemented in the Fall. We will build on the success of this model to include more languages.
- In response to student interest in applied language tracks, we established a departmental committee to develop a major in world languages that will focus more on language skills and less on literature and culture.
- We added flexibility to scheduling for students needing a bridge between the intermediate and advanced levels by offering content courses at the 200/300 level. This two-tier approach worked well with the French Media class taught spring semester.



Program: French B.A.	Completed By: Tama Engelking
Department: Modern Languages	Date: May 25, 2006

Goal 1: Students will demonstrate intermediate-high level of French oral language proficiency (listening and speaking—according to ACTFL Proficiency guidelines)

Outcomes	Research Methods	Findings	Review	Actions
Progress toward this goal is assessed in all language skills classes by oral exams and oral presentations. A standardized rubric is used .	Oral exams and presentations were included all language skills classes. Oral presentations are required in every French class	One rubric is insufficient for the different types of oral assessments given.	The French faculty meets regularly to discuss students' progress. Faculty development often includes attending sessions and workshops on oral assessment methods. When a student has applied for graduation, we review his/her portfolio in preparation for the oral exit interview	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) For one-on-one oral assessments we are supplementing our rubric with "Dynamic Assessment" techniques (see appendix) 2) Oral assessments are now included in content classes as well those focusing on skills. We are requiring some form of oral presentation in every French class. 3) We will continue to revise our rubrics, examine other models, and study new methods and techniques. 4) Oral proficiency goals need to be included on course syllabi of those courses with oral components. We have still not formalized the language for this.



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<p>Graduating seniors demonstrate their oral proficiency during an exit interview conducted in French</p>	<p>Exit interviews were conducted with all graduating seniors, who have a major or minor in French</p>	<p>Two majors and three French minors were interviewed. The two majors demonstrated advanced oral proficiency. Both have been accepted into graduate school. Of the three minors, two demonstrated advanced intermediate level proficiency, while one was only at the intermediate level. Two of these minors, both majoring in International Relations, will work as English assistants in France next year as part of a French government program. We will continue to advise students to apply for this program. The third minor will pursue an MFA in creative writing</p>	<p>The French faculty find the exit interview to be the single most useful tool for assessing our program. However, the format is not as conducive to assessing oral proficiency as a formal one on one interview conducted with the single goal of assessing oral skills. While ACTFL has established proficiency guidelines and regularly conducts workshops in this area, the French faculty do not have the specific training to conduct an ACTFL accredited interview.</p>	<p>We continue to seek ways to increase the oral proficiency of our students and to provide useful feedback on their skills levels. 1) We have effectively recruited students to work as English assistants in French schools. We invited a student who taught in France last year to speak with interested students. This was a big success and we now have two students who will teach in Rouen and Nantes next year. 2) We recruited seven students for our summer study abroad program. 3) New recruitment strategies include working with the International Business faculty on the language requirement component of the degree. We have proposed that our study abroad program be included as a experiential option, and we are planning information forums for IB students in the Fall.. 4) We will seek funding to participate in an ACTFL proficiency training workshop. 5) One student completed an internship in an international firm that required translation skills. This practicum will be added as an elective 5) Explored models for establishing a language floor in student resident halls. Arabic space approved first.</p>
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Future teachers have their skills assess by the Praxis II exam	Students seeking teaching certification are required to pass the oral part of the Praxis II exam. Information as to whether a student has passed the test or not is included on his/her transcript, but we have not yet been able to collect specific test scores	None of our students took the Praxis exam this year	None	None



Goal 2: Students will demonstrate ability to write accurately in French at an advanced proficiency level on literary or cultural topics, and to use narrative and analytical tools to analyze French literary texts.

Outcomes	Research Methods	Findings	Review	Actions
<p>Students are given writing assignments of increasing difficulty, culminating in several long papers in all upper-level culture and literature classes. Selected papers are compiled in student portfolios.</p>	<p>We examine the writing samples in the student portfolio for all graduating majors to assess the level of the student's writing skills. Writing is one area discussed during the exit interview.</p>	<p>1) We find the students' writing improves if given the opportunity to rewrite assignments 2) A solid grammar foundation is the key to writing success. This foundation needs to be established early on, and continually reinforced.</p>	<p>The French faculty meets regularly to review the curriculum. We conduct the exit interview and review findings for each graduating senior. Writing samples show that students are meeting the proficiency goals, but feedback on writing continues to be a most valuable learning tool. We find that less prepared students need more opportunities to write. Some students lack the research skills needed to write a research paper.</p>	<p>1) We include grammar components in all skills courses and review as needed in other courses 2) We designed a standardized rubric for writing, but found it to be an inadequate form of feedback. Students now receive detailed written comments on their writing in addition to the rubric to target areas to improve. 3) We revised the writing rubric to better indicate strengths and weaknesses</p>
				<p>4) We have designated most of our upper-level courses as writing courses that allow for feedback and rewriting 5) For classes requiring a research paper, library sessions on conducting research have been added. We will work on improving this component. 6) To provide a bridge to upper level writing courses for weaker students, we will offer some of our 200-level content courses at the 300-level and require extensive writing and more reading..</p>



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<p>Students in all courses at 200-level and above will take the Brigham Young placement test each semester</p>	<p>Gathering of quantitative data from this test will allow us to chart student progress in language skills over the different levels. This test provides an indirect measure of language skills</p>	<p>Data collection began Spring 2005. An Assessment grant funded a student worker who began compiling statistics into a data base. Students were also asked to answer a brief questionnaire about the experience. It was difficult to convince students to take the exam each semester.</p>	<p>Insufficient data to review since few students have taken the exam more than once. We are looking for improvement at each level, so we will continue to gather data.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) A report on our assessment grant project was given to the Assessment council. 2) To assure that students take the exam each semester, we will have them take the placement exam as part of class (instead of on a volunteer basis) 2) A second assessment grant will pay for a student worker to continue working on the data base with the goal of eventually graphing the data into a useful tool to visually track progress from level to level. 3) Faculty attended a training session where we learned to "read" the results of the placement test. This will help us to better advise our students, and to track their improvements.
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Goal 3: Students will demonstrate knowledge of French cultural and literary heritage and identity as evidenced by understanding major French literary movements and historical events from the middle Ages to the 18th century and/or the 19th century to the present; they will also demonstrate familiarity with the historical connections between France and the French diaspora, and be able to identify important postcolonial issues, major Francophone writers and/or film makers.

Outcomes	Research Methods	Findings	Review	Actions
Through a sequence of culture and literature courses, students learn major events, people and movements that shaped today's France, and distinguish major literary movements by identifying characteristics of various genres by period.	Content-based exams from a 300-level culture class and an upper-level literature class included in the student portfolio. These provide direct evidence of outcomes being met.	Students should take content-based courses that include literature and culture. The French major now requires a survey class in literature as well as one in civilization. (previously offered as an elective only). Students express interest in an applied track in their major that includes courses in translation.	The French faculty meet regularly to review the curriculum. During the exit interviews we discuss the mix of culture and literature courses taken with students. The department discussed the need to accommodate students interested in applied language by developing a world language major.	1) Departmental committee established to develop a world languages major for students with a practical interest in mastering and applying language skills, rather than preparing for a teaching career or graduate degree.
Knowledge assessed through content-based essay and short answer tests. Praxis II exam required for future teachers also assess this knowledge.	Gathered data on which students have passed the Praxis II exam. Individual scores are not reported, but we will ask students to include that information during exit interviews. This exam is an indirect measure of cultural and literary knowledge.	The Praxis II exam includes information on French and Francophone culture and literature. Our curriculum should reflect this mix. Students who have this mix do well on the Praxis II exam. All of our students who have taken the exam have passed it, although none of our students took it this year		2) Implemented change in major requirements to include one literature and one culture survey. This change provides added flexibility for student schedules as well. 3) Faculty continues to develop Francophone curriculum and to incorporate Francophone components into required courses. 1.



<p>Through Francophone materials incorporated into required courses (literary works, film, political discussions), and through selective courses on Francophone topics, students will learn about the historical connections between France and the French-speaking world, be able to distinguish some of the major Francophone writers and film makers, and to identify some of the important issues in postcolonial studies</p>	<p>Content based exams, research papers and oral presentations will be included in special topics courses (may be on Francophone topics). Some of these materials will be included in student portfolio.</p>	<p>Students are enthusiastic about courses with Francophone content. This was reiterated during exit interviews.</p>	<p>Some Francophone content is included in required coursework, but we decided to make this implied goal more explicit to reflect the importance of Francophone studies today, and the impact it has had on traditional French programs. Our program is keeping in step with a national trend.</p>	<p>4) Faculty has established a revolving schedule that will make Francophone topics available as electives on a regular basis.</p>
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RUBRIC FOR FRENCH WRITING ASSIGNMENT:

Name: _____ Course: _____ Semester _____

Topic: _____ Grade _____

NOTE: Your paper is being assessed in the following areas. Not all areas are equally weighted. The grading scale is as follows:

Excellent = 90-100% (A level work) Inadequate = 60-69% (D level work)
Good = 80-89% (B level work) Unacceptable = 59% or less (failing)
Acceptable = 70-79% (C level work)

GENERAL CONTENT:

INTRODUCTION AND CONCLUSION

_____ **Excellent:** An introduction that attracts the reader. Logical and clearly stated conclusion.

_____ **Good:** Introduction and conclusion related to thesis, but could be improved.

_____ **Acceptable:** More effort is needed to make the introduction more attractive to the reader. Conclusion may be weak or not closely related to thesis.

_____ **Inadequate:** Extensive rewriting of introduction and conclusion is needed to make them relevant.

_____ **Unacceptable:** Level of class and materials are too difficult for you, or you need to change your methods of work and the amount of time you devote to written assignments.

THESIS STATEMENT OR MAIN QUESTION:

_____ **Excellent:** Clear thesis statement.

_____ **Good:** Main question or thesis statement is not always clearly expressed.

_____ **Acceptable:** Thesis statement or main question unclear or unfocused.

_____ **Inadequate:** Cannot identify thesis statement or main question

_____ **Unacceptable:** Level of class or materials are too difficult for you, or you need to change your methods of work and the amount of time you devote to written assignments

ORGANIZATION:

_____ **Excellent:** Logical and smooth transitions.

_____ **Good:** Essay progresses in a generally logical order but transitions could be smoother.

_____ **Acceptable:** Essay content is generally good but too short, poorly organized or doesn't sufficiently answer the main question or illustrate the main thesis.

_____ **Inadequate:** Essay too short, poorly organized and doesn't answer the main question or illustrate the main thesis.

_____ **Unacceptable:** Level of class or materials are too difficult for you, or you need to change your methods of work and the amount of time you devote to written assignments.

EVIDENCE AND ARGUMENT:

- ___ **Excellent:** Sufficient evidence to support your argument (quotes, paraphrases, examples), answers the main question or thesis posed.
- ___ **Good:** Arguments could be better supported, better chosen, or more examples could be given.
- ___ **Acceptable:** Argument is unconvincing or is not well supported, though content is generally good.
- ___ **Inadequate:** Argument not supported or doesn't clearly relate to thesis or main question.
- ___ **Unacceptable:** Level of class or materials are too difficult for you, or you need to change your methods of work and the amount of time you devote to written assignments.

UNDERSTANDING OF TEXT:

- ___ **Excellent:** Excellent understanding of the topic or text.
- ___ **Good:** Shows good understanding of topic or text.
- ___ **Acceptable:** Understanding of topic or text is not clearly shown, may be generalized or simplistic.
- ___ **Inadequate:** Inadequate understanding of topic or text.
- ___ **Unacceptable:** Level of class or materials are too difficult for you, or you need to change your methods of work and the amount of time you devote to written assignments

FORM (Language, grammar, format, etc.)

VOCABULARY AND LANGUAGE USE

- ___ **Excellent:** Shows highly proficient and accurate language usage, including idioms; excellent variety of vocabulary.
- ___ **Good:** Proficient and generally accurate language use. Efforts made to use idiomatic expressions, although sometimes awkwardly.
- ___ **Acceptable:** Shows sufficient knowledge of the language, but more effort is needed to write more precisely.
- ___ **Inadequate:** Limited, misused or repetitive vocabulary, language usage below expected level.
- ___ **Unacceptable:** Clearly insufficient knowledge of the language.

GRAMMAR AND ACCURACY

- ___ **Excellent:** Free of significant errors. No weak or illogical constructions, good proofing. Evidence of effective and intelligent use of the dictionary; demonstrates that you can apply the grammar points learned.
- ___ **Good:** More attention should be paid to literal translations and Anglicisms, spelling (agreements, verb endings) and points of grammar, but results are generally good. Evidence of some proofing.
- ___ **Acceptable:** Verify words in the dictionary for spelling and usage to avoid repetitions, refer to verb conjugations for correct endings and usage of tenses and modes; make a greater effort to apply the grammar learned. More proofing is needed.
- ___ **Inadequate:** Shows inadequate knowledge of grammar that makes the essay difficult to understand. Poor proofing. Refer to basic grammar rules, especially those

we've recently learned or reviewed, learn the verb conjugations and use a good dictionary.

____ **Unacceptable:** Unacceptable mistakes at every level. Did you reread your essay? Many serious changes needed to make it acceptable.

FORMAT (especially for research papers)

____ **Excellent:** Accurately follows MLA format for quotations, bibliography, etc. Shows clear evidence of research, correct and effective use of outside sources.

____ **Good:** Generally accurate formatting for quotations and bibliography. Quotations may be overlong, paraphrases could be improved, evidence of research, but number and/or type of outside sources used could be improved.

____ **Acceptable:** Formatting does not consistently conform to MLA, though some knowledge of MLA format evident. Research is limited or oversimplified; use of outside sources through citation or paraphrase does not always conform to MLA guidelines. A workshop on library research may be useful.

____ **Inadequate:** Formatting does not conform to MLA. Little evidence of research; outside resources absent or misused. A workshop on library research is recommended to bring your research skills up to expected levels. Do you have a copy of the MLA Style Manual?

____ **Unacceptable:** Clear misunderstanding or ignorance of MLA format. Unacceptable or misuse of outside resources or complete absence of research. A workshop on library research is required to bring your research skills up to expected levels. You need to consult the MLA Style Manual.

OTHER COMMENTS: