

2015-2016 Yearly Assessment Report College of Arts and Sciences (CAS)

1. Identifying Information

Name of Program: French Studies

Type of Program: Major, Minor, Advanced Certificate

College of Arts and Sciences Division (Humanities):

Matthew Motyka SJ // Email Address: mjmotyka@usfca.edu

Name/Email Address of Additional Individuals Who Should Receive Feedback:

Karen Bouwer/bouwerk@usfca.edu

Anne Mairesse/mairesse@usfca.edu

Ahmed Bangura/banguraa@usfca.edu

2. Mission Statement

Inspired by the Statement of Mission of the University of San Francisco, a Jesuit and Catholic university, the Department of Modern and Classical Languages states as its essential objective to "offers students the knowledge and skills needed to succeed as persons and professionals, and the values and sensitivity necessary to be men and women for others." The Department promotes language acquisition for academic and professional needs and promotes the multidisciplinary study of cultures and societies within our increasingly multicultural communities in order to foster sensitivity and openness to be of service to others.

Has this statement been revised in the last few years?

Yes.

3. Program Goals:

The objective of the French Studies major is to provide oral and written competence in the language and a solid background in the literature and culture of the countries of the French-speaking world.

Have these goals been revised in the last few years?

Yes

4. Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

Students will:

1. demonstrate the ability to communicate clearly and effectively in French, both in written and oral discourse.
2. demonstrate basic knowledge and understanding of the literature, language and culture of the French speaking world.

3. demonstrate the critical ability to analyze the ideas and formal features of an integrated body of texts authored in French.
4. respond in discussion and reflective writing to issues of injustice, discrimination, and inequality while keeping in mind a critical historical perspective.

Have these PLOs been revised in the last few years?

Yes, in regards to the mission of the institution and program.

**5. Brief Summary of Most Recent Assessment Plan
Assessment Plan for 2015-2016**

Fall 2015: Plan assessment activities for Spring 2016.

Spring 2016: 1. Review PLOs

2. Complete curriculum map, due July 1, 2016.

3. Evaluate PLO 1 in FREN 315 Paris: Biographie d'une ville

4. Review data collected and write up assessment plan.

FRENCH STUDIES ASSESSMENT PLO 1 – SPRING 2016

Professor: Motyka

Course: FREN 315, Paris: Biographie d'une ville

Students: 11

PLO:

1. Demonstrate the ability to communicate clearly and effectively in French, both in written and oral discourse.

In Spring 2016, we will conduct pre- and post-testing to assess the gains in writing and speaking (PLO 1) made by students completing French 315, "Paris: Biographie d'une ville." We will administer the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL) test once during the third (pre-) and once during the 15th week (post-). This test measures gains in Interpersonal Listening and Speaking, Presentational Writing, and Interpretive Reading and Listening from the Novice-Low to the Advanced-Low levels of the ACTFL Performance Scale.

6. Methods

What did you do with regard to assessment of your program/department in 2015-2016?

Direct method: a published standardized test

In Spring 2016, we conducted pre- and post-testing to assess the gains in writing and speaking (PLO 1) made by students completing French 315, "Paris: Biographie d'une ville." We administered the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL) test once during the third (pre-) and once during the 15th week (post-). This test measures gains in Interpersonal Listening and Speaking, Presentational Writing, and Interpretive Reading and Listening from the Novice-Low to the Advanced-Low levels of the ACTFL Performance Scale.

ACTFL Performance Scale

ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines	ACTFL Performance Scale	AAPPL Measure Performance Score	Form	
Advanced Low	ADVANCED	A	A	B
Intermediate High		I-5		
Intermediate Mid		I-4		
Intermediate Mid		I-3		
Intermediate Mid		I-2		
Intermediate Low	INTERMEDIATE	I-1	A	
Novice High		N-4		
Novice Mid		N-3		
Novice Mid		N-2		
Novice Low	NOVICE	N-1		

Our Results:

PRE-TEST		French315				
First Name	Last Name	Testing Date	ILS - Speaking	PW - Writing	IL - Listening	IR - Reading
		2/9/16	I4	I4	Not ordered	Not ordered
		2/9/16	I4	I1	I5	I5
		2/9/16	Not ordered	I4	Not ordered	A
		2/9/16	I5	I4	Not ordered	Not ordered
		2/9/16	I4	I5	Not ordered	Not ordered
		2/9/16	Not ordered	I5	Not ordered	A
		2/9/16	A	Partially Comp	Partially Completed	I5
		2/9/16	I4	Not ordered	Not ordered	Not ordered
		2/9/16	I4	I5	Not ordered	Not ordered
POST-TEST		French315				
First Name	Last Name	Testing Date	ILS - Speaking	PW - Writing	IL - Listening	IR - Reading
		5/5/16	Not Started	I4	Not ordered	Not ordered
		5/5/16	I4	I3	I5	A
		5/5/16	Not ordered	I5	Not Started	A
		5/5/16	Not Started	I4	Not Started	I5
		5/5/16	I4	I5	Not ordered	Not ordered
		5/5/16	I4	I4	Not ordered	Not ordered
		5/5/16	Not ordered	I5	I5	A
		5/5/16	I5	Not ordered	Not Started	A
		5/5/16	Not Started	I5	Not Started	I5
		5/5/16	A	Not ordered	Not ordered	Not ordered
		5/5/16	I5	I5	Not ordered	Not ordered

7. Closing the Loop

What might you do as a result of these assessment results? What curricular or programmatic changes might you implement?

First of all we wanted to use an objective tool (standardized test) to assess our students performance (our PLO1). In choosing the test we took into consideration the cost (\$25 per student). The AAPPL test seemed to be the most affordable. However, as we implemented it, we saw that it was not the best test for the type of measurement we wanted to perform. Most of the students could not finish in time all the sections of the test. During the post-test we asked students to repeat only the sections they completed in the pre-test. The results of the pre-test were very encouraging nevertheless. Our goal in upper division classes is to have mid-intermediate level. Several students who started learning French at our institution showed already in the pre-test the required level. The most noticeable improvement was in the reading skill: in the pre-test, 2 students have an advanced level (A), in the post-test, 4 achieved the A level. In writing 3 students moved from I4 or lower to I5. Some had a lower score. In

speaking, students either maintained their level or went higher (3 improved their previous level).

In the future it would be necessary to adopt a test that would examine more specifically the gains of this content course. All things considered, the results are very encouraging for the program. We certainly meet the national standards as recommended by ACTFL. The test has shown that our program prepares students well regarding the proficiency goal we have proposed. Our main goal is to work toward a greater standardization of learning outcomes at the lower division language classes. This will require more collaboration between instructors teaching lower division and those in charge of upper division.

Last Academic Program Review

Date of most recent Academic Program Review's External Reviewer Visit: 2010

Recommendations of the 2010 Program Review:

1. Improve coordination, consultation, and cooperation among faculty members.
2. Develop transitional courses at the 200-level taught in French.
3. Better sequencing, and renumbering of courses at the 200-300-and 400 levels .
4. Regularity in the offerings of attractive content courses taught in French and within the department to better serve the French majors and minors; a capstone experience for graduating seniors.
5. re-naming courses to make them less discouraging (i.e., French Literature I and II, or Introduction to Textual Analysis may sound overly difficult to potential majors or minors.

Responses to 2010 Recommendations:

1. **In response to recommendations made in 2010 (especially # 2, #3, & #5 above) the French Program modified the content of many courses and introduced several new courses, as follows:**
 - FREN 100: Intensive French (8 units, new course). This new course meets 3 times a week but for twice as long as a regular class to simulate French immersion and accelerate language acquisition. It enables students to reach the intermediate level (201) after completion of just one semester of French. Like First Year Seminars, the course is capped at 16 and receives a small stipend to support extra-curricular activities. While advancing faster students have a greater incentive to consider pursuing a minor or a major. Conversely, students may also delay taking their first language requirement course until their junior or senior year.
 - FREN 255: "Diplomatie sans Frontières", (4 units) replaced the former and more traditional "Le Français des affaires," offered at the 300 level, to reflect today's global economy, and current issues of social justice.
 - FREN 265: "Les Enfants Terribles", (4 units, new course), a culture course that introduces students to contemporary French culture and colloquial French through the prism of French rebellious figures.
 - FREN 275, "Cultures de France," (4 units) replaced "French Culture and

Civilization” and was renumbered at the 200-level. “Cultures de France” focuses on contemporary French society to reflect cultural changes, while the former French Culture and Civilization surveyed major historical and political events from the Middle-Ages to modern times (roughly the Fourth Republic).

- FREN 312: “Finesses de la Langue” (2 units, new course) aims at grammatical sophistication, to improve reading and writing skills. This course is offered in support of, and in tandem with, one other French upper-division course, and can be repeated. While it is primarily a grammar review course, it provides support with reading and writing in connection to material studied in another French upper-division course. “Finesses de la Langue” replaced “Advanced Grammar and Composition” a 4-unit traditional advanced grammar course required upon completion of Fourth Semester French (202).
- Faculty have an on-going discussion about re-numbering 312 AS 312 or adding “Finesses de la Langue” 310 (2-units each) as incentive for students to repeat the course while taking a literature and culture course concurrently. This “structural” 2-unit course has proven to be invaluable to students who would resent taking a traditional 4 unit grammar course, but benefit from an “add-on 2-unit course” concurrently to enrollment in upper-division literature and culture courses.
- FREN 315, “Paris: Biographie d’une ville,” (4 units, new course), is a literature and culture course that concentrates on Paris as the once capital of the world, retracting its rich historical heritage and strong intellectual and cultural legacy.
- FREN 320: “Le Plaisir du Texte”, 4 units (formerly entitled “Introduction to Textual Analysis”) is an introductory course to reading and analysis literary texts structured by genres for methodology purposes: Poems, Plays, Novels.
- FREN 322: “Le Bon Sens et la Folie,” 4 units (formerly entitled “French Literature I”) is an introductory course to the literature and culture of the 17th and 18th Centuries.
- FREN 324: “Guerre et Paix,” 4 units (formerly entitled “Introduction to French Literature II” is an introductory course to the literature and culture of the 19th and 20th Centuries.
- FREN 330: Rencontres : L’Afrique francophone (formerly entitled “Francophone Literature I”) introduces students to a range of African Francophone texts while exploring definitions of the word “francophone” and variations of French that have evolved in Africa.
- FREN 332: Rencontres : Le monde francophone (formerly entitled

“Francophone Literature II”) studies the evolution of French as well as literary and cultural texts from the French-speaking world (excluding Africa).

- FREN 440: “Special Topics Seminar.” 440 is an umbrella number for senior-level seminars offered on different topics relevant to French literature. FREN 440 includes “Images du Féminin” a seminar on major French women writers, inclusive of male perceptions of women in literature.
- FREN 450 “Special Topics Seminar” is an umbrella number for senior-level seminars offered on different topics relevant to Francophone Literature. FREN 450 includes, for example, “L’Algérie française, la France algérienne.”

2. In response to recommendations # 2, #3, and #4:

Per the recommendations of the 2010 external reviewers, 200-level transition courses were added, 300-level courses were created and re-named to reflect the changing time and our students needs: New or restructured 300-level courses better reflect the political, historical and societal contexts relevant to a specific time period and/or region of the world.

400 level-seminars (440 and 450) concentrate on special topics or themes or a variety of subject matters for more in-depth knowledge and understanding of French and francophone literatures and cultures. 400-level seminars introduce special topics often developed by the faculty’s main research interest or specialty. (See course descriptions below).

3. In response to recommendation #1 (improve coordination, consultation, and cooperation among faculty members.):

Several initiatives were taken: the most recent one under Zhiqiang Li’s Chairmanship, who advocated for and was granted a retitle of the position of program coordinator to Program Director (fall 2015). The primary goal is to support the Program Director’s initiatives and responsibilities with regard to issues of coordination and governance.

For example, in order to stimulate more collaboration, the Director is working to initiate and enforce attendance to regularly scheduled meetings of instructors who teach multiple sections at each level of language courses so they can share teaching methodologies, streamline their use of campus-wide course technology (Canvas), and prepare similar or common exams for assessment purposes as per the PLOs.

In spite of curriculum changes to address the transition between lower and upper division, which includes FT faculty to teach lower-division language courses, and conversely, include PT faculty to teach 200-level courses, (in one instance, one PT faculty was promoted to teach a 200-level course of her own creation), the division between FT and PT faculty needs to be improved.

The Program Director often resorts to holding multiple meetings because of scheduling conflicts. Compensation issues for PT faculty meetings are often the source of discontent on both sides. Email communications have also proven to be a source of liability, which further encourages the *status quo*.

Initiatives to be promoted include:

Anne Mairesse proposed to initiate a “presentation talk” to be hosted once a semester in a French class to foster collegiality among instructors, but also inform students about the French program, its faculty, their research. Other French courses offered concurrently (same day/time), and their instructors would be able to join as well. Each semester two or more French courses are offered at the same day/time. This event can potentially bring together 3 or more instructors, and 66 or more students together. This can help promote the visibility of the French program, improve collegiality among faculty, and create interactions for students to bridge the gap between lower and upper-division.

A weekly French Ciné-club was inaugurated at the library in Spring 2016 in coordination with the offering of FREN 340: French Cinema and Literature.

As Faculty Advisor to the French club, Anne Mairesse hopes to reinstate weekly conversation tables with funding.

Karen Bouwer initiated the French Studies Alumni Facebook group as well as the USF Chapter of the French Honor Society Alpha Delta Pi. Moreover, she works with a benefactor who sponsors interest in a study of the Southern region of France, Béarn, and its connection to the Bay Area community. This collaboration has resulted already in three scholarly talks open to the general public.

Matthew Motyka has reorganized the French Studies website that includes now testimonials from former and current majors.

Among the cultural activities proposed to be implemented in the lower division classes is to sit in one upper division class.

The program awards the annual scholarship for a French major/minor intending to study in France. The Lafayette scholarship is made possible by a gift from a donor.

4. Also in response to recommendations #4 and #5:

Due largely to the small number of majors, the recommendation of an honor thesis for graduating seniors has not been pursued or implemented.

The regularity of upper-division offerings has not been respected or consistent because of class cancellations due to low-enrollment numbers.

It is important to note that the implementation of 200-level courses constitute

another layer of courses, which may further delay and impede the offerings of higher level courses: instead of offering a 300-level course and a 400-level course together, it has been the case that caution guided us to offering one 200-level course and one 300-level course instead to secure more enrollments.