Program: FREN BA

Department: Foreign Languages

Number of students enrolled in the program in Fall, 2011: 14

Faculty member completing template: Kevin Elstob

Period of reference in the template: 2006-07 to present

1. Please describe your program's learning-outcomes trajectory since 2006-07: Has there been a transformation of organizational culture regarding the establishment of learning outcomes and the capacity to assess progress toward their achievement? If so, during which academic year would you say the transformation became noticeable? What lies ahead; what is the next likely step in developing a learning-outcomes organizational culture within the program?

[Please limit your response to 200 words or less]

Since 2006-07, we have aligned our courses in the BA by plotting a matrix of our classes for three levels:

- Introduction/gateway (first-year classes emphasizing skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing).
- Development/Discovery (second-year and some upper division classes stimulating intellectual openness and interest in French and Francophone culture while continuing to maintain and reinforce communicative skills).
- Mastery (upper division that meet the student learning outcomes)

The Learning Outcomes Matrix identifies which classes to assess for mastery. We have grounded our student learning outcomes assessment in “The 5 C’s”: Communication, Culture, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities (see below #2). Between 2007 and 2011, we developed rubrics and surveys of the learning outcomes for the “mastery” level classes. We started by concentrating on the “Communication” outcome - ”what students can do with language” rather than ”what they know about language.” We also developed a survey to gauge student outcomes in the area of communities – do students participate in local French organizations and activities. By analyzing the results we have identified our program strengths and our areas of concern for our various objectives. We will continue to collect and compile data based on the rubrics we already have and also create and use rubrics for all of the outcomes. We also are working on formalizing our French Graduation Interview for graduating seniors and looking to possibly put into practice an exam along the lines of the Spanish section.

2. Please list in prioritized order (or indicate no prioritization regarding) up to four desired learning outcomes (“takeaways” concerning such elements of curriculum as perspectives, specific content knowledge, skill sets, confidence levels) for students completing the program. For each stated outcome, please provide the reason that it was designated as desired by the faculty associated with the program.
Our student learning outcomes assessment are known as the “The 5 C’s”: Communication, Culture, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities

a) Communication: Students demonstrate their ability to engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions; understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics; present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics.

b) Culture: Students show an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied; an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied.

c) Connections: Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language; acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures.

d) Comparisons and Communities: There are two “takeaways” in this area. Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and their own and the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own. Students use the language both within and beyond the school setting and demonstrate that they are becoming life-long learners by using the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment.

All of the learning outcomes are linked and reinforce each other. There is no hierarchy to these unifying concepts and processes, it is best to understand them as five interconnecting areas. However, Communication is the outcome that we have worked on the most.

[Please limit your response per outcome to 300 words or less]

3.  For undergraduate programs only, in what ways are the set of desired learning outcomes described above aligned with the University’s Baccalaureate Learning Goals? Please be as specific as possible.

[Please limit your response to 400 words or less]

We have identified the University’s Baccalaureate Learning Goals by a number and have put the number in parentheses after each of our Student Learning Outcomes to show with which Baccalaureate Learning Goal our Student Learning Outcomes align: 1. Competence in the Disciplines; 2. Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World; 3. Intellectual and Practical Skills; 4. Personal and Social Responsibility; 5. Integrative Learning

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR FRENCH LANGUAGE LEARNING

COMMUNICATION

Students engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions (2, 3)
Students understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics (2, 3)

Students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics. (2, 3)

CULTURES
Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied (1, 2, 3, 4)

Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied(1, 2, 3, 4)

CONNECTIONS
Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language (3, 5)

Students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures (3, 5)

COMPARISONS
Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and their own (2, 3, 5)

Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own. (2, 3, 5)

COMMUNITIES
Participate in Multilingual Communities at Home & Around the World

Students use the language both within and beyond the school setting (4, 5)

Students show evidence of becoming life-long learners by using the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment. (4, 5)

4. For each desired outcome indicated in item 2 above, please:
   a) Describe the method(s) by which its ongoing pursuit is monitored and measured.

Students come from a variety of linguistic backgrounds and experiences with French. They may be continuing with us having done the first two semesters of French at CSUS, they also come to us having completed two semesters at a community college. Students often transfer into our program, for example, in spring, which is technically the mid way point of the academic year, means that if we try to make them take classes in a certain order then they will not always be able to rotate into the sequence. They may have spent time in a French-speaking country, or they may be heritage or native speakers. As a small program that welcomes students who have come to French from a variety of different experiences, we have a flexible approach to the order in which students can
take classes. We allow students to take classes in an order that suits their schedule so long as they have the necessary proficiency in French.

The French Major is a small program that endeavors to offer students the opportunity of doing their major in 4 semesters. Ideally students would take 3 classes per semester. Due to scheduling clashes, classes that may be canceled due to low enrollment, and so on it may be necessary for students to take longer or opt for some of our alternatives:

- Study Abroad: by taking a semester or year abroad, a student can take equivalents to the required and elective courses at CSUS
- Special Problems: for scheduling conflicts, class cancellations, etc we do our best to provide students with independent study options so that they can fulfill the requirements. Students can also do special problems for specific areas of study of French they would like to investigate that are not offered.

Any assessment of our classes has to be done with these factors in mind. We cannot test in particular classes that are identified as having a lot of seniors who are at the end of a course of study. We have to assess individual classes for the particular learning outcomes that each class is covering rather than being able to test a range of learning outcomes in a capstone or culminating class. In order to evaluate the teaching effectiveness of each class, we assess what level of competency should be acquired by what proportion of the students taking the class given the various academic origins of our students.

b) Include a description of the sample of students (e.g., random sample of transfer students declaring the major; graduating seniors) from whom data were/will be collected and the frequency and schedule with which the data in question were/will be collected.

c) Describe and append a sample (or samples) of the “instrument” (e.g., survey or test), “artifact” (e.g., writing sample and evaluative protocol, performance review sheet), or other device used to assess the status of the learning outcomes desired by the program.

d) Explain how the program faculty analyzed and evaluated (will analyze and evaluate) the data to reach conclusions about each desired student learning outcome.

[Please limit your response to 200 words or less per learning outcome]

b. We have carried out our assessment of student learning outcomes in classes where mastery of a particular outcome can be evaluated. For example, Fren 109 was chosen as one of two sites for directly evaluating student oral proficiency since it is a well-enrolled class that stresses the use of authentic oral French through its focus on dialogue in scenes from contemporary French movies.

c. Using the “Rubric for Evaluating Conversations” for this class (see Appendix A), the students conversations were evaluated for completion of task, fluency, level of discourse, comprehensibility of message, vocabulary, and language control.

d. This class had 26 total students: 15 Majors; 5 students had spent a year or more in France or were native speakers; 6 students already spoke two other languages; 3 students were taking their
first or second upper division class. It is common for our classes to have this variety in terms of previous practice of the language and, as we decide what standards to use to assess our classes, it is essential to take into account that we can have a broad spectrum of abilities in the class.

Conclusions (See Appendix B)

- completion of task ranged from 3.46 to 3.56
- language control ranged from 3.40 to 3.49
- comprehensibility of message ranged from 3.39 to 3.45
- fluency ranged from 3.07 to 3.20
- level of discourse ranged from 2.96 to 3.23
- vocabulary ranged from 3.07 – 3.20

It is the feeling of our faculty that our goal should be to have students’ scores average above 3.5 by the end of the class. Based on this goal, we can draw conclusions about the oral proficiency of our students and evaluate their level of mastery for the “Communications” outcome.

(If the requested data and/or analysis are not yet available for any of the learning outcomes, please explain why and describe the plan by which these will occur. Please limit your response to 500 words or less.)

5. Regarding each outcome and method discussed in items 2 and 4 above, please provide examples of how findings from the learning outcomes process have been utilized to address decisions to revise or maintain elements of the curriculum (including decisions to alter the program’s desired outcomes). If such decision-making has not yet occurred, please describe the plan by which it will occur.

[Please limit your response to 200 words or less per item]

a) Here is an example of how the “Communication” outcome was analyzed. From the results, we found: a. In order to improve scores in the three areas that need the most improvement (fluency, level of discourse, vocabulary) we feel that students need more oral practice. We thought of three ways in which this can be achieved:

- Instructors must use French in the classroom with the students at all times
- Instructors must insist that students get used to using French in the classroom at all times, and also should be strongly encouraged to use French when consulting with the instructor (advising, office hours, email, casual encounters on campus, in the corridor etc)
- We should make more effort to bring into the classroom guests who are native speakers in order to encourage more interaction in French
- We should find ways to get students to practice French outside of the classroom with local French-speaking activities (movies, speakers, events etc)
b. We monitor if these changes achieve the desired results through the scores in classes where mastery of oral proficiency is one of the stated goals of the class.

6. Has the program systematically sought data from alumni to measure the longer-term effects of accomplishment of the program’s learning outcomes? If so, please describe the approach to this information-gathering and the ways in which the information will be applied to the program's curriculum. If such activity has not yet occurred, please describe the plan by which it will occur.

[Please limit your response to 300 words or less]

We do not have a formalized way of collecting data from alumni. However, during our program review last year, the Department contacted alumni by mail and compiled the data to assess what students do once they have finished our BA programs. For French, we have been able to keep track of some of our students since a number of them have continued on to post-BA study training such as a single subject credential in French graduate study at UC Davis, or various translator/interpreter programs at the Monterey Institute of Languages or other establishments. We would like to develop a more formalized way of keeping in touch with our alumni and are looking into options like Facebook and/or another social or email network that would be easy to maintain.

7. Does the program pursue learning outcomes identified by an accrediting or other professional discipline-related organization as important? Does the set of outcomes pursued by your program exceed those identified as important by your accrediting or other professional discipline-related organization?

[Please limit your response to 300 words or less]

The “5 C’s” learning outcomes that we describe above are part of the National Standards for Foreign Language learning in the USA. We also use ACTFL (American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages) guidelines for assessing proficiency in writing, speaking, reading, and listening.

8. Finally, what additional information would you like to share with the Senate Committee on Instructional Program Priorities regarding the program’s desired learning outcomes and assessment of their accomplishment?

[Please limit your response to 200 words or less]