Assessment Report 2013 - 2014
Department of Foreign Languages
(French)

June 6 2014

The Assessment Committee is formed by Professors Kevin Elstob, Barbara Carle, Kazue Masuyama, Beatrice Russell and María Mayberry.

What follows is the report for the French section:

Option 1: Narrative Submission: please address the following questions.
1. What goals or learning objectives/outcomes were assessed in AYs.
    In AY 2013-2014, the French area assessed the following learning objective for two programs (French B.A., and Minor in French):

* Learning objective: Students can communicate effectively in written language.

    Since 2007, we have been assessing speaking and listening (oral) skills and continued to do so this year (2013-2014). This is the first time that assessment data for communicating effectively in written language for the BA and Minor in French are included in the report.

    This report uses the following legend to describe the levels of proficiency of the appropriate assessed skills depending on the program:

    I= Introduced:
        beginning = 1 (score of 64 or lower)
    D= Developed & Practiced with Feedback:
        developing = 2 (score of 65 to 74); or
        good = 3 (score of 75 to 84)
    M= Demonstrated at the Mastery Level Appropriate for Graduation:
        competent = 4 (score of 85 to 94); or
        accomplished = 5 (score of 95 or higher)

This work will include formative assessment (from coursework) for both programs (B. A. and Minor in French). However, although the same learning outcomes are used for both programs, different levels of achievement are expected at each level. Moreover, following the recommendations from the "Feedback for the 2011-2012 Annual Assessment Report", this report indicates benchmark levels of achievement expected for students at each level of complexity (Introduction, Development and Mastery) and maps the benchmark levels of achievement for students at different levels in the curriculum as follows:

a. Students in the Minor program are expected to demonstrate knowledge at the Developed level (D), with a score of 2 or 3 in the writing rubric.
b. Students in the B. A. program, depending on their class level (freshman, sophomore, or junior), are expected to demonstrate achieved skills at the Developed (D) level in coursework

assignments (with a score of 2 or 3) or Mastery level (M) with a score of 4 in coursework at the senior class level.

2. How did you assess these learning outcomes?

a. Describe the measures you used and the information gathered? (Description, date administered, results)

The learning outcome was assessed through the evaluation of compositions (direct measure) collected during the Fall 2014, and students' unofficial transcripts (indirect measure).
Using the "Rubric for Writing" (see Appendix 1), each composition was evaluated for general proficiency and language competence—broken down into the following five components:

      i.   clarity of thesis
      ii. knowledge of writing conventions (grammar; spelling, accent marks, etc.)
      iii. organization and coherence
      iv. sentence fluency
      v. vocabulary

ASSESSMENT OF BA AND MINOR IN FRENCH

1. **Compositions.** Assessment included evaluation of one short composition that was part of the final exam in the Survey of French Literature course, French 110. French 110 was chosen to gather data for direct assessment to serve as a baseline of students' writing skills because it is a class that requires students to perform analytical writing through study of literary texts in French. The requirement for French 110 is to have taken an upper division French class either:

- composition (FREN 103), grammar (FREN 101), or practice of French (FREN 109).

Students can also be accepted into the class without the requirement as long as they have the permission of the instructor. By assessing the writing skills of students in French 110, we were able to compare the impact of having taken (or not) one or these upper division French classes focusing on composition and grammar. French 110 is a requirement of students majoring in French and there are several students who take it as part of their minor in French. Enrollment for the class was 25 students (17 seniors, five juniors, one freshman, one freshman enrolled through Open University CCE, and one Post-Bacc enrolled through Open University CCE year and two, sophomore). Among these there were nine majors, 13 minors, 2 Open University and one student interested in declaring a minor, but had not done so at the time of the class.

The Assessment Report for the B.A. includes the results of compositions of 22 students (nine majors and 13 minors).

Data analysis of the **compositions** yielded the following results:

B. A. in French (achievement expected levels: 2, 3, 4)
- Average score (Total: 100 points)   86
- Students scoring 85-94 (competent-4) 67% (6 students)
- Students scoring 75-84 (good-3)   22.% (2 students)
- Students scoring 65-74 (developing-2) 11% (1 student)

Minor in French (achievement expected levels: 2, 3)
- Average score (Total: 100 points)   81
- Students scoring 85-94 (competent-4)   23% (3 students)
- Students scoring 75-84 (good-3)   69% (9 students)
- Students scoring 65-74 (developing-2)   8% (1 student)

A. (Thesis out of 20 points)
- Average score – B. A. students   17 (good-3)
- Average score – Minor students   17 (good-3)

B. (Conventions out of 20 points)
- Average score – B. A. students   17 (good-3)
- Average score – Minor students   16 (good-3)

C. (Organization out of 20 points)
- Average score – B. A. students   17 (good-3)
- Average score – Minor students   16 (good-3)

D. (Sentence Fluency out of 20 points)
- Average score – B. A. students   17 (good-3)
- Average score – Minor students   15.5 (between developing and good-2 and 3)

E. (Vocabulary out of 20 points)
- Average score – B. A. students   18 (competent-4)
- Average score – Minor students   17 (good-3)

Students' Transcripts. In order to form a clearer picture of the development of students' writing skills with respect to our programs, the students' progress in the program (B. A. or Minor) was examined.

Analysis of the students' transcripts shows that all but two of the students had taken one of the prerequisites. Analysis of the transcripts also show that the two learners (one in the B. A. one in the Minor) who obtained a score at the 'development' level (student 5 in Majors and student 7 in

Minors), with scores of 72 and 74 respectively had not taken one of the prerequisite classes. Those students who had taken the prerequisites scored in the good or competent range.

b. As a result of these assessments what did you learn about the program's success in helping its students achieve these learning outcomes?

B.A AND MINOR IN FRENCH Currently, there are three courses that are required for the B.A. program in French: French 47, Introduction to Grammar; French 103, Advanced Grammar; and French 106, Advanced Composition. By assessing the writing skills of students in French 102, we were able to compare the impact of having taken (or not) one or two of the grammar courses (47 and 103) and the composition class (French 106) in the French programs. Assessment data suggest that this sequence of courses helps learners to achieve this learning objective in order to communicate effectively in written language.

c. In what areas are students doing well and achieving expectations?
Overall, analysis of the compositions indicates that most students in the different programs (B.A. and Minor) can express themselves correctly in writing under testing conditions and are achieving expectations in Written Communication.

B. A. AND MINOR IN FRENCH. The data (seen in Appendix 2) show that almost all the students achieved the expected scores according to their class level (that is, 2, 3, 4 for the B. A. and 2, 3 for the Minor).

This assessment work shows that students in the B. A. tend to have a higher level of proficiency in writing than students in the minor program, which is expected considering that the curriculum for the Major in French consists of more upper division courses in French compared to the requirement of 12 upper division courses for the Minor. Moreover, the data indicate that students in the French B.A. and in the Minor in French can present ideas in a clear and logical order in writing at all levels although some learners still have weaknesses with the formal conventions of writing in French and with their vocabulary (fluency).

d. What areas are seen as needing improvement within your program?

B.A. AND MINOR IN FRENCH. The greatest difficulties for our students are the formal conventions of the language (accents, spelling, and grammar) as well as with the clear development of their ideas in a fluid and well-organized manner. They need to write more and feel that they can write in French as a natural and low anxiety activity. Areas for improvement would be vocabulary-building and using exercises to augment their fluency.

3. As a result of faculty reflection on these results, are there any program changes anticipated?
a. If so, what are those changes?

BA AND MINOR IN FRENCH. The data we have collected show that although the majority of learners are achieving expectations in the writing learning objective, many still need to widen their

vocabulary and improve and expand their knowledge of grammar in part but also their expressiveness. Given the differing levels of our students and the wide range of experiences they have with speaking French in a Francophone country, using the rubrics allows us to grade the progress and efforts of the students rather than their proficiency level. It would be unfair to give an A to a student who comes to the class speaking well but does not progress while a student who began at a lower level moved on to another level through her efforts in the class

b. How will you know if these changes achieve the anticipated results?

BA AND MINOR IN FRENCH. Although there are not changes anticipated, the committee will collect essays from senior courses in order to further assess program impact.

4. Did your department engage in any other assessment activities such as the development of rubrics, course alignment?

Yes. The "Rubric for Writing" (see Appendix 1) has been updated with new 'labels' that reflect the developmental nature of the writing proficiency (beginning, developed, good, competent and accomplished). For the upcoming academic year, we propose to revise the "Rubric for Writing" in order to incorporate criteria for the assessment of critical thinking skills and subject matter.

5. What assessment activities are planned for the upcoming academic year?

a. The following is a tentative Assessment Plan for the French programs:

Year 2014-2015. Learning Outcomes:
  i. **Students can engage in oral communications as evidenced by their ability to present an oral report on a given topic under testing conditions; or**
  ii. **Students engage in conversations in the target language in a variety of topics under testing conditions.**

Year 2015-2016. Learning Outcome: **Students can communicate effectively in written language.**

Rubric for Essays   (Appendix 1)
California State University, Sacramento

STUDENT_____ DATE_____ TOPIC_____

	1 Beginning	2 Developing	3 Good	4 Competent	5 Accomplished	Rating
Thesis: the extent to which the writing establishes a clear thesis to the reader	• Thesis is missing and/or absence of relevant evidence and details. (12.5 or below)	• Thesis is ambiguous or very vague or ignores the purpose of the assignment; evidence loosely related to the writing task. • Details are not clear. (13-14.5)	• Thesis is somewhat clear but evidence sometimes is inadequate to support all statements. • Details are general and not specific. Topic may be too big (15-16.5)	• Although not original, thesis is fairly clear and matches the writing task. , although evidence supports all statements. • Details are present but not developed. (17-18.5)	• Thesis is original, clear and closely matches the writing assignment; evidence is relevant and adequately supports the thesis. • Writing is full of details for support what is important about the topic. (19-20)	
Knowledge of Conventions: the extent to which the writing exhibits conventional spelling, accent marks; punctuation, and grammar	• Shows no mastery of conventions; poor grammar; virtually no mastery of sentence construction rules; does not communicate. • Dominated by errors of spelling, punctuation, and accent marks; *meaning **is** lost.* (12.5 or below)	• Major weaknesses in grammar that cause significant distraction; frequent errors in word order, agreement, tense, number, articles, pronouns, prepositions; reads like a translation from English.. • Frequent errors of spelling, punctuation, and accent marks; *meaning **is** confused or obscured.* (13-14.5)	• More frequent errors in word order, agreement, tense, number, articles, pronouns, prepositions. • More errors of spelling, punctuation, and accent marks; *meaning is obscured in some areas.* (15-16.5)	• Few grammatical errors that cause the reader some distraction; effective but simple constructions; several errors in word order, agreement, tense, number, articles, pronouns, prepositions. • Occasional errors of spelling, punctuation, and accent marks; *meaning seldom obscured.* (17-18.5)	• Shows mastery of conventions of construction of sentences (word order, agreement, tense, number, articles, pronouns, prepositions);. • Mastery of conventions of spelling, punctuation, and accent marks. (19-20)	
Organization and Coherence: the extent to which the writing maintains direction, focus, and coherence	• There is little no organization to the paper. • No explicit relationships among ideas in the paper. Many one-sentence paragraphs. • Writer makes no attempt to use transition words and phrases. There is no beginning or end to the paper. • Ideas seem scrambled, jumbled, disconnected. • Paper is confusing. The details do not fit with the main idea or story. Many unnecessary ideas are included. (12.5 or below)	• There is little organization to the paper. • Frequent digressions; loose connection of ideas. • Serious omissions or underdevelopment. • Writer makes littler attempt to use transition words and phrases. • A lot of the writing does not connect to the main idea or story. • Ending is missing or does not connect to the story or main idea. A lot of unnecessary ideas are included. (13-14.5)	• A title is present. The paper is somewhat organized, but seems unfinished. • Many irrelevant ideas/paragraphs included; many ideas omitted or not developed. • Writer makes an inconsistent attempt to use some basic transition words or phrases. • It is not clear how some details are connected to the main idea or story. • Some of the details are not in the right spot or are unnecessary. (15-16.5)	•An appropriate title is present. The ideas and details are mostly presented in logical order. • Some irrelevant ideas/paragraphs included; some ideas are omitted or not fully developed. • Writer makes a consistent attempt to use some transitions words and phrases to show the relationships among ideas. • Transition from one idea to next somewhat fluid. • Paper seems complete. Few ideas are unnecessary. (17-18.5)	• An original title is present. The paper has a clear beginning, middle & ending. • Ideas & details are presented in logical order. • Writer makes skillful use of transition words and phrases to show the relationships among ideas. • Transitions are internally coherent. • Paper is complete. It does not have unnecessary information. (19-20)	
Sentence/fluency: the extent to which the writing incorporates a variety of sentence patterns and flows smoothly from one idea to the next	• Writer uses simple sentences. Most of the sentences are unclear. • Paper is difficult to read. Difficult time identifying where one idea ends and the next begins. (12.5 or below)	• The writer makes some attempt to include different sentence patterns but with awkward or uneven success. • Paper does not flow smoothly. Sentences are choppy or awkward and many parts are difficult to read (13-14.5)	• The writer makes some attempt to include a range of varied sentence patterns. • Some parts of the paper are difficult to read. (15-16.5)	• The writer effectively incorporates a range of varied sentence patterns to reveal syntactic fluency. • Paper flows smoothly, but has some rough spots. (17-18.5)	• The writer consistently and effectively incorporates a range of varied sentence patterns to reveal syntactic fluency. • The writing is natural and flows smoothly. (19-20)	
Vocabulary: the extent to which the writing incorporates precise and extensive range of words and idioms	• Vocabulary is essentially translation; invented words; clear projection from English. • Word choices are confusing, unclear, or inappropriate. • *Meaning is unclear.* (12.5 or below)	• Although vocabulary is not all translation, •Word choices make the writing unclear to the reader. • *Word choices confuse the meaning* (13-14.5)	• Adequate range of vocabulary. • Word choices get the message across but frequent errors of word/idiom form, choice, and usage. • *Meaning is not obscured.* (15-16.5)	• Adequate range of vocabulary. • Occasional errors of word/idiom, choice, and usage, *but meaning is not obscured.* • The writer uses some interesting words and phrases that are clear. (17-18.5)	• Extensive and sophisticated range of vocabulary. • Word choices are precise, effective use of idioms, appropriate register. *Meaning is clear.* • The writing is interesting to read. (19-20)	

> 64	65-74	75-84	85-94	95-100	TOT: _____

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Assessment Scores and average – French B. A. and French Minor (Appendix 2)

French B.A.

	Total-Grade	Thesis	Convent.	Org	Fluency	Vocab
student 1	81	15	17	16	16	16
student 2	91	19	17.5	18	18	18.5
student 3	89	17	18	18	18	18
student 4	87	17	16	18	18	18
student 5	72	14	14	14	14	15
student 6	86	17	16.5	16	17	18.5
student 7	89	18	17	18	18	18
student 8	91	18	19	17	18	19
student 9	85	16	16	16.5	17	18.5
AVERAGE	86	17	17	17	17	18

French Minor

	Total-Grade	Thesis	Convent.	Org	Fluency	Vocab
student 1	86	18	17	18	17	16
student 2	81.5	17	15	15	15.5	19
student 3	78.5	16.5	15	16	15	16
student 4	86	17.5	18	16	17.5	17
student 5	83.5	18	15	17	15.5	18
student 6	79	16	15	17	15	16
student 7	74	17	13	16	13	15
student 8	78.5	16	15	14	15.5	18
student 9	80	17	15	17	15	16
student 10	76	16	16	16	13	15
student 11	83.5	18	15	17	15.5	18
student 12	91	19	17	17	19	19
student 13	76.5	14	16.5	15	15	16
AVERAGE	81	17	16	16	15.5	17