Assessment Plan
(October 15, 2010)

Majors:

- M.A. in French
- M.A. in Spanish
The Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures (FLAL) currently offer courses in fifteen languages and undergraduate majors in French, German, and Spanish, each with two emphases. Majors in French, German, and Spanish may also pursue teacher certification. The Major in Russian was unfortunately recently deleted. Minors are available in Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Russian, and Spanish. Students who wish to pursue further specialization in French or Spanish can enroll in a graduate program leading to the degree of Master of Arts. While FLAL is a strong teaching department with many award-winning teachers, faculty members also maintain active research agendas.

In our state-of-the-art Multimedia Learning Center students can expand their exposure to languages. Students with interest in educational technology can pursue the Foreign Language Instructional Technology Graduate Certificate Program.

Founded in 1972, our Foreign Language Residence Program is one of the oldest in the United States. Students joining this language-immersion program live together with native speakers on a Foreign Language Floor in Douglas Residence Hall. Many of our students also take the opportunity to study abroad, some with support from three competitive departmental scholarships.

Students have the opportunity to participate in a number of interdisciplinary minors in which FLAL is involved: Classical Studies, Comparative Literature, Latino/Latin American Studies, Linguistics, and Southeast Asian Studies.

The six majors in the departments share the assessment and are, therefore, treated here as one unit for this purpose.

Assessment Description

Ongoing assessment of the M.A. program in Foreign Languages & Literatures is conducted by various mechanisms. One mechanism is the oral defense of the thesis or practicum. The exam is administered in the target language after the student has completed writing the thesis or finished with the practicum assignment (usually a translation). Students' performance in the M.A. exam generally indicates a high level of advancement in individual knowledge bases. In combination with the written thesis or practicum document, the oral defense relates to the department's standards in writing, oral communication, and critical thinking. Depending upon the topic chosen by the student, the defense and thesis may also relate to the culture standard.

Another mechanism is the student portfolio. Graduate students are asked to submit a copy of their best-written work from each course taken toward the degree. This work is collected in a student portfolio that is reviewed after the student has graduated by an assessment committee comprised of two graduate faculty members in Spanish. The portfolio is a means by which not only to chart the student’s progress over the course of his/her studies but also assess as to whether or not the department is meeting its learning objectives. The use of the student portfolio relates to the department's assessment standards in written expression, and culture.

The NOPI (Northern Oral Proficiency Exam) is ideally administered to graduate students both when they enter and exit the program. This assessment instrument will relate directly to the oral communication standard. The other mechanism is an exit questionnaire administered to all students during their final semester of study.

The department also attempts to document the success of graduates by tracking them after graduation. The alumni survey – unfortunately – does not get a significant number of replies; therefore, the department discontinued its use. The department has in place two indirect methods of assessment. The first is the feedback on the program that the director of graduate studies receives.
from the students advised. Through this means, the department has become more aware of student interest in the fields of linguistics and translation studies. The second is the newsletter of the Department of Foreign Languages & Literatures: *Lingua Links*. The department has received information from former graduates of its programs. It is hoped that the newsletter will allow the department to track the success of its students to an extent.

**Student Learning Objectives**

The Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures is involved in the assessment of the educational process to ensure that students receive the best education possible.

(1) Graduates of FL&L will be able to communicate successfully in one or more foreign languages in their chosen professional careers. They will also be prepared to enroll in advanced degree programs, to teach at the secondary level, or find employment that takes advantage of their communicative, analytical and critical skills.

Upon completion of a major in Foreign Languages, students will at a minimum attain a rating of "proficient" in

(2) Writing in the Target Language (IL) – WRITING PROFICIENCY

(3) TL-text comprehension – READING PROFICIENCY

(4) Oral communication in a variety of settings in the TL – ORAL COMMUNICATION PROFICIENCY

(5) The understanding of the culture of the TL and in the ability to function appropriately in the TL culture – CULTURE PROFICIENCY

**Methods**

FL&L has instituted an Assessment Committee which is responsible for directing, implementing, and changing the departmental assessment policies. Program assessment methods in the department include four major components (the recently implemented changes are underlined):

(A) Portfolio
(B) Northern Simulated Oral Proficiency Interview (NOPI)
(C) Initial Interview
(D) Exit Questionnaire
(E) Alumni Survey
(F) M.A. Defense
(G) *Lingua Links*
Outcomes by Methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Portfolio</th>
<th>NGPI</th>
<th>Initial Interview</th>
<th>Exit Questionnaire</th>
<th>M.A. Defense</th>
<th>Lingua Links</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Mission-specific proficiency</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Writing proficiency</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Reading Proficiency</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Oral Communication proficiency</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Cultural proficiency</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>