

# Foreign Languages and Literatures BA

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## *Expanded Statement of Institutional Purpose*

### **Institutional Mission Reference**

Due to the growing globalization of culture, commerce and politics, our students will have to become increasingly literate in international and interdisciplinary discourses. The declared goal of Old Dominion University to be the premier international university of the Commonwealth of Virginia is a clear recognition of this momentous development. More than ever our students will have to become familiar with foreign languages and cultures in order to compete successfully on a national and international level. These educational challenges are the quintessence of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures. Currently, our department offers the ten following languages: Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Latin, Russian and Spanish (with Hebrew added in the fall 2002 and the possible introduction of Portuguese in 2004). The program offers majors and minors in French, German and Spanish. Furthermore, the recently established additional minors in European Studies, Latin American Studies and Japanese studies makes the study of other disciplines an integral part of their degree requirements. All our minors can ideally complement majors in disciplines such as Engineering, International Business, etc. giving graduates a definite advantage in future job markets. Employers are looking increasingly for professionals with a combination of special training and a well-rounded education in a foreign language and culture. ("Future markets will demand 20% natural scientists and 80% humanists", wrote Fachdienst Germanistik, 12, 1998.) In a similar vein, Nations Bank, the largest bank in the United States, encourages students to study abroad and offers benefits for employees that have study abroad experience. In sum, given the increasingly multicultural and interdisciplinary orientation of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, it can be considered a natural matrix and crucible for the university's mission to teach across the borders and internationalize its programs and curricula.

### **Institutional Goal(s) Supported**

To graduate students who are linguistically proficient and literate in a foreign culture is the principle goal of our program. The Bachelor of Arts in Foreign Languages and Literatures requires a minimum of 30 hours in French, German, or Spanish at the 300-400 level, completion of the University's General Education requirements, and six hours of Foreign Language and Literatures core courses with the following two options: Option A: a second foreign language at any level (recommended for students seeking licensure in Secondary Education), Option B: area studies relevant to the language concentration which consists of a list of departmentally approved courses. The B.A. in FL can be taken as (a) Foreign Languages and Literatures Concentration, (b) Foreign Languages and Literatures with Licensure in Secondary Education.

## *Intended Educational (Student) Outcomes, Methods for Assessment, Criteria for Success, Assessment Results, and Use of Results*

### **Intended Outcome 1**

Students take the Wisconsin Test.

**Method for Assessing Outcome 1 and Criterion for Success:** The Wisconsin Test is administered in the Language Learning Center to students majoring in German, French, and Spanish. Students must take this test before they graduate from the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures. The intent of this testing program is to measure a student's level of achievement upon graduating from the department. Each student is tested on Grammar, Reading and Listening. Scores from this test are kept on file with the Director of the Language Learning Center.

Standards of performance set for the Wisconsin Test are as follows:

(a)Grammar/Reading Raw Score	(b)Listening Raw Score	(c)Standard
German = 55	German = 35	German = 850
French = 64	French = 44	French = 850
Spanish = 77	Spanish = 36	Spanish = 850

**Summary of Assessment Data Collected for Outcome 1:** The Wisconsin Test was administered to 4 students in Spanish in 2003. Scores for the Spanish Grammar and Reading section ranged from 74 to 76 (the highest possible score is 77). For the Listening section, scores ranged from 35 to 36 (the highest possible score is 36).

The Wisconsin Test was administered to 2 students in French in 2003. The results of the Grammar and Reading sections were 59 and 62 (the highest possible score is 64). For the Listening section, the scores were 40 and 33 (the highest possible score is 44).

The Wisconsin test was administered to 1 student in German in 2003. The result of the Grammar and Reading section was 53 (the highest possible score is 55). For the Listening section, the score was 34 (the highest possible score is 35).

### **Intended Outcome 2**

Students are given the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) by trained examiners and scored according to the internationally recognized norms for the exam.

**Method for Assessing Outcome 2 and Criterion for Success:** This interview is given prior to graduation for students majoring in German, French and Spanish. The interviewer must have received training in oral proficiency interviewing and rating practices based on techniques endorsed by the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) and modified by ACTFL and Educational Testing Service for academic application. In the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, Dr. Stephen Foster is certified in French, Nancy Miguez is certified "in house only" in Spanish and Regula Meier is certified in German. The ACTFL/ETS Oral Proficiency Interview is a face-to-face conversation lasting anywhere between ten and twenty-five minutes, depending on the level of the person being tested. The oral interview must be taped for future verification.

Student verification is based on the following ratings: (1)Novice-Low, (2)Novice-Mid, (3)Novice-High, (4)Intermediate-Low, (5)Intermediate-Mid, (6)Intermediate-High, (7)Advanced, (8)Advanced-Plus and (9)Superior.

**Summary of Assessment Data Collected for Outcome 2:** The Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) was administered to 5 students in Spanish. The results of the OPI were: “Superior” for all 5 students.

The OPI was administered to 2 students in French. The results of the OPI were: “Superior” and “Intermediate-High.”

The OPI was administered to 3 students in German by faculty member Regula Meier. The results of the OPI were: "Advanced-Plus," "Superior" and "Intermediate."

It should be noted that Ms. Regula Meier will continue to administer the OPI Test in German on a regular basis and will be paid an assessment fee for her services to the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures. She is OPI certified as defined by ACTFL.

### **Intended Outcome 3**

Students submit two writing samples from the appropriate upper-level classes. These papers will be spaced in time so as to allow for a measure of growth and development in the skills of the student.

**Method for Assessing Outcome 3 and Criterion for Success:** Every student graduating from the department must submit writing samples from their classes. An instructor, according to current definitions for writing proficiency that appear in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, evaluates these writing samples. A writing sample is taken from 312U and 405/407. A student must demonstrate consistent accuracy in his/her ability to meet set standards.

Students must demonstrate consistent accuracy in his/her ability:

1. to express present and/or future times
2. to express past time in both simple and compound tenses
3. to identify need and use of appropriate moods
4. to choose appropriate vocabulary with some circumlocution
5. to use diacritical marks
6. to spell and form nonalphabetic symbols
7. to use appropriate punctuation
8. to use appropriate word order
9. to show agreement, e.g. adjective/noun, subject/verb
10. to make complex sentences
11. to use cohesive devices, such as pronouns
12. to demonstrate organization of thoughts, e.g. chronological or logical ordering, cause and effect, comparison, thematic
13. to think and write in paragraphs
14. to demonstrate awareness of stylistic and/or cultural variation
15. to be understood by native speakers not familiar with English

**Summary of Assessment Data Collected for Outcome 3:** During the spring semester 2003, 6 Student Writing Samples were collected from the Spanish 312U course, "Communicative Competence: Writing and Reading," and assessed by Dr. Carolyn Dunlap, Assistant Professor of Spanish. 5 Student Writing Samples were collected from the Spanish 405/407 course, "Advanced Grammar and Syntax," and assessed by Dr. Carolyn Dunlap as well.

**Intended Outcome 4**

Students must meet with the Chair of the Department for the the Exit Interview.

**Method for Assessing Outcome 4 and Criterion for Success:** Students majoring in German, French or Spanish will complete an exit interview with the Chair of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, Frederick Lubich, in the semester prior to the student's graduation. Questions and answers from this interview are kept on file in the Chair's office. The Exit Interview consists of the following:

Part I, Questions about your background:

Major?

At what level did you enter program?

How long did it take you to complete program?

Were there sufficient courses to allow you to finish within four years total?

Did you need to take independent study courses?

Have you studied abroad?

Have you used financial aid?

Age?

Sex?

Part II, Questionnaire for the exit interview:

What did you find most beneficial in your educational experience?

In what ways has your education made you more aware of other cultures?

How do you assess the value of your educational experiences in terms of your career goals?

In what ways, if any, did your foreign language courses help you in other disciplines?

What suggestions do you have for improvement of the major program?

Why did you choose to major in a foreign language?

Exit Interview Questions for Spanish

1. Are prerequisites for advanced (300/400) level courses adequate? Ex: SPAN 311 or 312 as a prerequisite for literature courses.

2. Is the balance offered between courses focused on L.A. and Spain beneficial?

3. Do you think that the advanced language courses offered are sufficient (311, 312, 405, 415)?

4. Would an "Introduction to Literary Analysis" course offered/required after 202 and before 300-level literature courses be helpful?

**Summary of Assessment Data Collected for Outcome 4:** Students completed the Exit Interview with the Interim Chair of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, Dr. Stephen Foster, during the 2002-2003 academic year. Dr. Frederick Lubich will continue the Exit Interviews beginning May 24, 2003.