

Institutional Effectiveness 2022-2023

Program: Foreign Languages BA

College and Department: College of Arts & Sciences, Department of Foreign Language

Contact: Martin Sheehan

Mission:

The Department of Foreign Languages (DFL) is proud to offer foreign language courses, study abroad experiences, and co-curricular opportunities that prepare Tech graduates to compete in today's global marketplace. The major in foreign languages (with concentrations in French, German, or Spanish) cultivates foreign language proficiency and cultural understanding in our students to equip them for success in a wide variety of careers and for postgraduate studies. Students may also double major, earn a minor (in French, German, Spanish, or International Studies), or become an International Business and Cultures (IBAC) major, a joint degree between the College of Business and the College of Arts and Sciences. The DFL also assists in training the next generation of foreign language teachers for K-12 classrooms across the state, region, and country.

Furthermore, the DFL offers numerous Culture and Civilization courses (taught in English) that support the intercultural education of TTU students. These courses allow students to fulfill Tech's general education: humanities elective while developing their analytic and presentational skills. Through our English as a Second Language (ESL) courses, the DFL supports Tech's diverse population of international students as they seek to attain sufficient linguistic competency in English in order to be successful in ENGL 1010 and subsequent coursework at Tennessee Tech. Furthermore, we organize symposia, film series, lectures, and cultural events in order to foster international awareness and cultural understanding within the Tech community.

The DFL is committed to developing, providing, and promoting study abroad experiences for majors and non-majors. Thanks to its FLST 1011 and 1013 courses, the DFL is a major support for all Tech students seeking to learn languages abroad that are not regularly offered at Tech.

The ongoing mission of the Department of Foreign Languages is to foster the multilingual proficiency, intercultural understanding, and professionalization of Tennessee Tech students through our foreign language courses, our culture and civilization courses, and the cultural activities that we offer to our stakeholders throughout the year. In this way, we directly support TTU's Tech Tomorrow Strategic Plan by:

- developing, providing, and promoting experiences that emphasize diversity and build global awareness (Goal 1 - Education for Life)
- implementing and continually improving our technologically infused instruction at all levels in order to enhance foreign language and cultural learning (Goal 2 - Innovation in All We Do)

- creating distinctive programs that aim to improve our students’ marketability in today’s multicultural environment in a manner that is increasingly effective and efficient (Goal 3 - Exceptional Stewardship, Goal 4 - Engagement for Impact).

Working in concert with the national World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), the DFL strives to provide quality education to our Majors in foreign languages and to our non-Majors. Our program learning outcomes align closely with these standards and stipulate that our students will be able to communicate effectively in oral and written modes in the target language, interpret culturally authentic texts, and exhibit intercultural competency.

Attach Curriculum Map (Educational Programs Only): *See Appendix 1.

PG 1: GRADUATION RATE

Define Outcome:

The DFL will recruit, retain, and graduate enough students to achieve an average of 13 graduates a year. Programs that graduate less than an average of 10 majors over a period of 5 years can be classified as low producing and risk elimination. Thus, our aspirational target performance would be an average of 13 graduates over a 5-year period because that figure would indicate the growth and strength of our programs.

Assessment Methods:

The DFL tracks the number of majors each semester, where our current majors are in their academic pipeline, and the number of graduates each semester. This information is recorded in the annual departmental report, which is disseminated and discussed at the first department meeting each year. The faculty then use this report to brainstorm new recruitment and retention strategies for the academic year.

Criteria for Success (Thresholds for Assessment Methods):

Threshold of acceptability:

- Target Performance: an average of 13 graduates over 5-year period
- Minimum Performance: an average of 8 graduates over 5-year period

Results and Analysis:

Enrollments for Foreign Languages, Fall

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Change 2018-2022
First Major	13	23	29	23	17	+4

First and Second Majors	40	47	38	37	40	+0
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Foreign Language Degrees Conferred

2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	5-year average
7	9	5	14	12	9.4

For 2022-2023, the department had 12 graduates with a 5-year average of 9.4. This is above our minimum performance threshold of 8 and below our target performance threshold of an of 13 graduates.

Use of Results to Improve Outcomes:

During the planning year, several outreach events and activities were planned and executed to attract, retain, and graduate majors. To draw students to Tech, each language program was represented at the Fall Preview Day event on campus. During the event, faculty spoke with prospective students about language learning in general and what majoring or minoring in a foreign language at Tech might mean for their future. This community engagement directly resulted in at least one new German major joining our department, and the event most likely had a significant indirect impact on enrollments across the department. Faculty also visited Cookeville High School to speak with foreign language students there about what continuing in the discipline might look like for them. Additionally, at the Window on the World cultural festival in April, student organizations from each language engaged with the public and the interim chair organized an informational panel made up of foreign language majors and minors. Because some of these outreach activities were aimed at high school students and other members of the general public, these efforts might not bear dividends until years down the line when students are applying for college.

Based on these results, the department plans to take several steps to increase its 5-year average of graduates. Outreach events are planned this academic year that will focus on specific themes and target audiences: students that have recently returned from studying abroad will discuss their experiences in a public panel format and STEM majors on campus will be invited to hear how a foreign language might open up international opportunities for them. Additionally, at least one faculty-led study abroad course to France is planned for Spring 2024. This high impact practice should help with recruiting, retaining, and graduating French majors.

Lastly, it should be noted that the department is beginning the 23/24 AY in a new location on campus. In July of 2023, the department office and the majority of departmental faculty moved from Oakley Hall to Henderson Hall. The department plans to raise its profile in this new

location, which is a major office and classroom building for the two other BA programs at our university (History and English.)

PG 2: CULTURE AND CIVILIZATION COURSES (GEN ED)

Define Outcome:

The DFL will aim to offer 5 English-language culture courses each academic year in order to contribute diverse courses to the general education core at Tech.

In 2014, the Provost's office expressed the need for more general education: fine arts/humanities courses to be offered to TTU students. As such, the department has made an effort to increase its the number of culture and civilization courses it offers to meet this need-- FLST 2520: The Cultures and Peoples of North Africa, FREN 2510: French Culture and Civilization, GERM 2520: German Culture and Civilization, SPAN 2510: Spanish Culture and Civilization, and SPAN 2550: Latin American Culture and Civilization. Significant efforts have also been made to create online and hybrid versions of these courses to meet student need.

Assessment Methods:

The DFL will track the number of fine arts/humanities courses it offers each year, as well as the total number of students enrolled in each course each semester to identify enrollment trends.

Criteria for Success (Thresholds for Assessment Methods):

Threshold of acceptability

- Target Performance: 5 cult/civ courses per year
- Minimum Performance: 2 cult/civ courses per year

Results and Analysis:

Culture and Civilization Courses

	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Total # of Culture and Civilization Courses	2	2	3	3	7

For 2022-2023, the department greatly exceeded its minimum performance threshold of 2.

Use of Results to Improve Outcomes:

During the planning year, the interim chair Dr. Martin Sheehan explained at several faculty meetings how vital these general education courses could be to improving the faculty-to-student credit hour ratio in the department and how important these courses could be for recruitment.

After reviewing these data, the department decided to continue increasing the frequency with which these general education and civilization courses are offered whenever possible for several reasons. These classes, it was argued, represent an excellent way to engage students whose CPOS otherwise would not allow them to take a course in our department. Several STEM CPOS on campus provide little to no room for foreign language courses or, indeed, any electives at all. With these culture and civilization courses as an option within the general education core, we continue to enrich and engage students who could not otherwise take a course in our department.

SLO 1: FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Define Outcome:

By their senior year, foreign language majors will be able to confidently demonstrate their proficiency in their targeted language with 75% scoring at the proficient or advanced level on the senior capstone paper/presentation rubric.

Assessment Methods:

- 1. Senior Capstone Paper/Presentation Rubric** – All students complete a senior capstone experience that is evaluated via a rubric. The rubric was developed to examine and improve students' level of speaking proficiency in their targeted language. The rubric aligns with the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and evaluates 6 areas of proficiency. Students will demonstrate the ability to:
 - Create comprehensible oral output (i.e., their thoughts, ideas, and opinions) in the target language (Advanced-Low level minimum as described by ACTFL)
 - Create comprehensible written output (i.e., their thoughts, ideas, and opinions) in the target language (Advanced-Low level minimum as described by ACTFL)
 - Analyze and evaluate authentic material in the target language in its written and spoken forms (Advanced-Low level minimum as described by ACTFL)
 - Analyze, apply, and evaluate assumptions, concepts, and theories to provide valid responses, conclusions, or recommendations
 - Compare and evaluate the relationship between the products, practices, and perspectives of the cultures of the target language and the student
 - Apply and justify the use of the language beyond a school setting, including in a professional setting

Students are evaluated on all 6 areas of the rubric and results are evaluated to determine proficiency and identify areas of strength and weakness. For each rubric area, at least 75% of students scoring at the Proficient or Advanced level.

Criteria for Success (Thresholds for Assessment Methods):

Senior Capstone Paper/Presentation Rubric For each rubric area, at least 75% of students scoring at the Proficient or Advanced level.

Results and Analysis:

SLOs 1: Foreign Language Proficiency

	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Total # of Capstone Students	8	10	5	14	7
# that met minimum performance threshold of 75%	8	8	4	13	5
# that did not meet minimum performance threshold of 75%	0	2	1	1	2
% of Students meeting minimum performance threshold of 75%	100%	75%	80%	93%	71%

With 71% of students meeting the minimum threshold of 75% on their Capstone presentations, the department narrowly missed its minimum performance threshold of 75% for 2022-2023.

Use of Results to Improve Outcomes:

During the planning year, no significant new actions were taken to impact performance. Rising seniors are still encouraged to attend the Capstone presentations of others to see what form the presentations could take, and faculty are still working to provide enough presentational assessments at the 3000 level and above, so that student have sufficient practice speaking before their Capstone presentation as seniors.

Based on these results, the faculty decided to take several steps to improve student performance on their capstone presentations. One option is to increase the number of oral presentations in upper-level courses when possible. It was argued that this could reduce the anxiety levels that some presenters experience, and anxiety was identified as a factor in the weaker performances.

When asked what might have contributed to missing the threshold this year, faculty responded that the language decay that occurred during the the height of the pandemic could not be ruled out. Despite the department's best efforts, it was exceedingly challenging to achieve the same outcomes in an online environment that were expected and achieved in a traditional classroom environment.

SLO 2: TEACHER LICENSURE PROGRAM AND EDTPA PERFORMANCE

Define Outcome:

Foreign language majors seeking teaching licensure will demonstrate content and pedagogical knowledge and skills by meeting or exceeding a passing score on the respective performance-based subject-specific assessment as set by the State Board of Education.

Assessment Methods:

The edTPA is a performance-based, subject specific assessment that measures teaching-based skills related to planning, instruction, and assessment. Students in the foreign language program must complete the World Languages performance task. The edTPA is professionally scored by Pearson, and the Tennessee State Board of Education sets candidate cut scores.

Criteria for Success (Thresholds for Assessment Methods):

Threshold of acceptability

- Target Performance: The total mean score for licensure students taking the World Languages edTPA exceeds Tech’s cut score (AY 22/23=?)
- Minimum Performance: The total mean score for licensure students taking the World Languages edTPA is at least Tech’s cut score (AY 22/23=?)

Results and Analysis:

edTPA results

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23		
	TTU	TTU	TTU	TTU	TTU	TTU	State	National
N=	3	1	1	2	3	8	42	580
Planning	3	3	2.8	3.4	3.1	3.1	3	2.9
Instruction	2.3	2.4	2	2.3	2.1	2.6	2.3	2.4
Assessment	2.9	3	3	3.8	2.9	2.7	2.7	2.6
Total Mean Score	35.3	36	33	40	34	36.4	34.6	33.8

TTU's total mean score this year of 36.4 is higher than the current cut score of 35 for world languages.

Use of Results to Improve Outcomes:

This past year, the coordinator for our licensure program, Dr. Mike Olsen, reviewed the major assignments in his SEED 4125 Materials & Methods-Teaching Foreign Languages, which all future foreign language education students must take at Tech. Dr. Olsen clarified in several major and minor projects how these assessments aligned with tasks on the edTPA. It was

theorized that this approach might have positively impacted overall performance. These changes will remain moving forward, because they appear to prepare Tech students for the edTPA instrument.

The performance results are forecast to improve next year for a reason outside of Tech's control. As of January 2023, job-embedded teachers will no longer be required to take the edTPA in Tennessee. Because they already possess a bachelor's degree in a subject area, job-embedded educators are working as full-time K12 teachers while concurrently completing MA coursework in education to earn their teaching credentials. Previously, these job-embedded teachers were required to pass the edTPA, and, if their undergraduate degrees were from Tech, then they would count towards our edTPA total, regardless of whether we ever had them as a French, German, or Spanish student. This change in the licensure requirement for job-embedded teachers means that, moving forward, our edTPA data will correspond only to French, German, and Tech students seeking licensure. This change should improve our continual improvement efforts.

Summative Evaluation:

PG1: Outreach events are planned this academic year that will focus on specific themes and target audiences and, at least one faculty-led study abroad course to France is planned for Spring 2024. This high impact practice should help with recruiting, retaining, and graduating French majors.

PG2: The department decided to continue increasing the frequency with which general education and civilization courses are offered whenever possible.

SLO1: Based on capstone results, the faculty decided to increase the number of oral presentations in upper-level courses when possible.

Assessment Plan Changes:

SLO2: A change in the licensure requirement for job-embedded teachers means that, moving forward, our edTPA data will correspond only to French, German, and Tech students seeking licensure. This change should improve our continual improvement efforts.

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Curriculum Map, Foreign Languages BA

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German

Learning Outcomes (I=Introduce, R=Reinforce, M=Mastery, A=Assessment Opportunity)	REQUIRED COURSES									
	Foreign Language, German Option 1, Option 2 & German with Licensure, B.A.									
	2010 Intermediate German II	2020 Intermediate German II	3010 Written Comm in German	3020 Oral Comm in German	3112 German Civ/Cult	3150 Intro German Lit	4810 Special Topics	Upper Division	Upper Division	4920/4925 Capstone
Oral Communication Create comprehensible output in the target language (spoken) (Intermediate-Mid level minimum as described by ACTFL)	I	I	R	R, A	R	R	M	M	M	M, A
Written Communication Create comprehensible output in the target language (written) (Intermediate-Mid level minimum as described by ACTFL)	I	I	R, A	R	R	R	M	M	M	M, A
Interpretive Communication Analyze and evaluate authentic material in the target language in its written and spoken	I	I	R, A	R, A	R	R	M	M	M	M, A

forms (Intermediate-Mid level minimum as described by ACTFL)										
Intercultural Competency Compare and evaluate the relationship between the products, practices, and perspectives of the cultures of the target language and the student	I	I	R	R	R	R, A	M	M	M	M, A
Communities Apply and justify the use of the language beyond a school setting, including in a professional setting	I	I	R	R	R	R	M	M	M	M, A
Critical Thinking Analyze, apply, and evaluate assumptions, concepts, and theories to provide a valid response, conclusion, or recommendation	I	I	R	R	R	M,A	M,A	M,A	M,A	M,A

Appendix 1: Curriculum Map, Foreign Language BA, cont.

Spanish

Learning Outcomes (I=Introduce, R=Reinforce, M=Mastery, A=Assessment Opportunity)	REQUIRED COURSES									
	Foreign Language, Spanish Option 1, Option 2 & Spanish with Licensure, B.A.									
	2010	2020	3010 Oral Comm in French	3020 Written Comm in Spanish	4010/4020 Intro Lit of Spain/ Latin America	4110/4120 Cult/Civ of Spain/ Latin America	Upper Division	Upper Division	Upper Division	4920 Capstone
Oral Communication Create comprehensible output in the target language (spoken) (Intermediate-Mid level minimum as described by ACTFL)	I	I	R	R, A	R	R	M	M	M	M, A
Written Communication Create comprehensible output in the target language (written) (Intermediate-Mid level minimum as described by ACTFL)	I	I	R, A	R	R	R	M	M	M	M, A
Interpretive Communication Analyze and evaluate authentic material in the target language in its written and spoken forms	I	I	R, A	R, A	R	R	M	M	M	M, A

(Intermediate-Mid level minimum as described by ACTFL)										
Intercultural Competency Compare and evaluate the relationship between the products, practices, and perspectives of the cultures of the target language and the student	I	I	R	R	R	R, A	M	M	M	M, A
Communities Apply and justify the use of the language beyond a school setting, including in a professional setting	I	I	R	R	R	R	M	M	M	M, A
Critical Thinking Analyze, apply, and evaluate assumptions, concepts, and theories to provide a valid response, conclusion, or recommendation	I	I	R	R	R	M,A	M,A	M,A	M,A	M,A

Appendix 1: Curriculum Map, Foreign Language BA, cont.

French

Learning Outcomes (I=Introduce, R=Reinforce, M=Mastery, A=Assessment Opportunity)	REQUIRED COURSES Foreign Language, French Option 1, Option 2 & French with Licensure, B.A.									
	2010 Intermediate French I	2020 Intermediate French II	3010 Written Comm in French	3020 Oral Comm in French	3100 French Phonetics	3110 Survey French Lit I	3120 Survey French Lit II	3112 Cult/Civ of France	Upper Division	4920 Capstone
Oral Communication Create comprehensible output in the target language (spoken) (Intermediate-Mid level minimum as described by ACTFL)	I	I	R	R, A	R	R	R	M	M	M, A
Written Communication Create comprehensible output in the target language (written) (Intermediate-Mid level minimum as described by ACTFL)	I	I	R, A	R	R	R	R	M	M	M, A
Interpretive Communication Analyze and evaluate authentic material in the target language in its written and spoken forms (Intermediate-Mid level minimum as described by ACTFL)	I	I	R, A	R, A	R	R	M	M	M	M, A

Intercultural Competency Compare and evaluate the relationship between the products, practices, and perspectives of the cultures of the target language and the student	I	I	R	R	R	R, A	M	M	M	M, A
Communities Apply and justify the use of the language beyond a school setting, including in a professional setting	I	I	R	R	R	R	M	M	M	M, A
Critical Thinking Analyze, apply, and evaluate assumptions, concepts, and theories to provide a valid response, conclusion, or recommendation	I	I	R	R	R	M,A	M,A	M,A	M,A	M,A