**Expected Outcomes: Writing**

Graduating seniors in FLSP will communicate coherently in writing

**Related typical general education outcomes:**

7. Written Communication

**Assessment methods**

**Method:** Writing Samples

Student writing samples of five-typed pages of the student’s own work from the previous twelve months are gathered from all graduating seniors via a Canvas site linked to FLSP 4980 Senior Capstone assessment course. This happens in the Fall and in the Spring. Summer graduates do not currently submit written assessment materials. Faculty reviewers independently read the samples and give their evaluation of the subjects’ written proficiency in the table on the Assessment worksheet for Outcome One: Writing. The results are tabulated, announced to the Spanish faculty, and reported to OIRA.

**Findings:**

For 42 graduating seniors, the average score reported for Writing was 2.86/4.0. This score is slightly lower than last year’s score (2.92) and 2010 (3.0), but higher than the scores of 2.32 (2008) and 2.76 (2009). The pool of majors has shrunk by 20% since the previous year. However, it is still larger than our majors historically. All things considered, the FLSP program is doing well (we are above our target of 2.7/4.0), but we should be concerned about a possible deterioration in written skills. With two years in a row of lower scores in student writing, the faculty needs to diagnose the problem. Have our expectations changed, or are students writing less in their classes?

**How did you use findings for improvement?**

The faculty needs to verify it is collecting similar samples of student work, in type and in level, so that the writing assessment can be trusted. Second, our composition class as of F2012 (FLSP 3040) assigns II compositions, each with three versions, using peer reviews, and a strong emphasis on process. I will suggest to the faculty that this method be adopted for future sections of composition. I will also suggest that the faculty give writing assignments in all FLSP courses, especially from the second year forward, with an emphasis on outline, draft, and revision as a section-wide writing method. As I write this, I cannot say more than that I will suggest this to the faculty.

**Additional comments:**

See the results of the Oct. 5 general meeting on assessment posted to comments for the Outcome concerning Oral Communication.

**Expected Outcomes: Oral Communication**

Graduating seniors in FLSP will demonstrate competence in oral communication
Related typical general education outcomes:

8  Oral Communication

Assessment methods

Method: Speaking Samples

Samples of student speech consisting of one five-minute extemporaneous recording and one five-minute prepared recitation, both recordings submitted electronically and made during the last semester of the student’s Auburn undergraduate career, are submitted each Fall and Spring via a Canvas site linked to FLSP 4980, our Senior Capstone assessment course. This happens in the Fall and the Spring. Summer graduates do not currently submit oral assessment materials. Then faculty reviewers listen to the samples independently and give their evaluation of the subjects’ oral proficiency in the table on the Assessment worksheet for Outcome Two: Oral Communication. The results are tabulated, announced to the Spanish faculty, and reported to OIRA.

Findings:

For 42 graduating seniors, the average score of 2.9/4.0 is better than 2.83 (2011) and higher than 2.74/ (2010), and bit above 2.85 (2009), and again substantially better than 2008 (2.7). The large pool of graduates implies that the number is significant. At the same time, we observe a disparity between evaluators, who apparently have different expectations of the proficiency of graduating seniors, although all have similar training. We range from 2.68-2.98. For this reason we have multiple reviewers. Historically, we have set our target at 2.7, so this year’s score is acceptable. The steady improvement speaks to the success of the Spanish section’s focus on oral communication, which we have worked on for 2 years, and it seems to suggest a slight upward trend. The improved proficiency is also attributable to the continued growth of our abroad programs.

How did you use findings for improvement?

We will continue to focus on giving students the opportunity to practice their speaking of Spanish in all classes, not just in Conversation class (FLSP 3030). Speaking in a group setting is something our students enjoy, and it seems to be part of a larger learning style trend at the university, whereby students tune out of lectures and prefer to work it out for themselves in groups. This is across the curriculum. We will also send our students abroad, as much as possible.

Additional comments:

The FLL held a meeting on Friday Oct. 5, 2012 for which the sole agenda item was the assessment from the previous academic year. The faculty and lecturers met with their corresponding language sections. Those from minor-only language areas joined one of the larger areas. They discussed each of their assessment results as well as which area to focus on for the following AY. The group came together and determined that continuing to focus on oral communication would be the best way to strengthen overall student performance. The Spanish section pointed out regarding the culture quiz pilot results that it would be useful to the corresponding person(s) of expertise to know strengths and weaknesses of students. One of the faculty members also pointed out that the rubrics used for written and oral communication would be more helpful if each evaluator had a set of criteria for each score level. For the next year we will seek to make the student quizzes accessible to all faculty.

Expected Outcomes: Cultural Knowledge
Graduating seniors in FLSP will be able to read and understand cultural texts.

Related typical general education outcomes:

10 Intercultural Knowledge and Diversity Awareness

**Assessment methods**

**Method:** Cultural Literacy

Graduating seniors take a cultural quiz consisting of 100 multiple choice questions randomly selected from the more than 140 questions in the culture-question bank that the Spanish faculty generated from each of their respective specialties. The average score of the entire group of graduating seniors in the major is noted and compared to that of previous years. The results are stored on the department’s Sharepoint site.

**Findings:**

Our students took a culture quiz as part of their requirements for the senior capstone, FLSP 4980. The average score was 72.26%. This means that out of 100 questions they got an average of around 72 correct. To be honest, this is a surprisingly good number, given that the questions come from the ten different fields represented in our department, and students rarely take classes from all the faculty.

**How did you use findings for improvement?**

This is the first time we have given the culture quiz, so we have nothing to compare it to. We think that the number will be more useful as we accumulate data from year to year. A step toward improvement would be to spread the word among our faculty at all levels that culture counts so that they make efforts at every point of contact to teach the cultural notes that are in our textbooks, and in the news.

**Additional comments:**

None

**Expected Outcomes: Student Satisfaction**

Graduating seniors will leave Auburn with a sense that their major program was well designed, well managed, and beneficial.

Related typical general education outcomes:

**Assessment methods**

**Method:** Student Surveys

The instructor of FLSP 4980 administers a questionnaire to the enrolled students. In a series of questions, the survey asks for strengths and weaknesses in our program and suggestions for future courses and program improvement. Responses are gathered, summarized, shared with the Spanish faculty, stored in Qualtrics, and reported to OIRA.

**Findings:**

Graduating seniors in FLSP 4980 were required to complete an anonymous survey of their academic experience in our department. We received 48 completed surveys of a total of 49 seniors, a dramatic improvement over previous years. The results seem to show that seniors graduate happy with the academic program in Spanish. They like their professors, the variety of
course offerings, and the abroad programs. 14 or 25% of graduates mentioned they found Phonetics to be ‘incredibly useful.’ Who would imagine! They like Syntax almost as much. Some students mention literature and culture, Spanish commercial translation, and film as particularly rewarding. Finally, many many students point to their abroad experience as a culmination of their academic experience. As weaknesses several students mentioned the need for a Spanish-Only Policy in our classes. They said that we as a faculty speak too much English in class. Numerous students also pointed out a lack of class variety at the upper-level.

How did you use findings for improvement?

We will continue to develop our Phonetics and Syntax courses, and take to heart the fact that many students find these to be their favorite part of our program. We should encourage more students to study abroad because the fact is that they love it and it enhances student satisfaction with our major. I will suggest to the faculty that we enact a Spanish-Only Policy in our classes. Concerning the variety of classes, I think that the department is already working on more variety of upper-level work, such as more film, and language for the professions, such as Spanish for Health Care Professionals.

Additional comments:

None