

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
WSU Department of Foreign Languages
Self-Study Document, Fall 2019

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The following is a summary of the self-study document, highlighting important points. For complete information, please refer to the full, self-study document itself.

Mission Statement

The Department of Foreign Languages promotes global awareness and intercultural understanding by providing instruction in various languages. We prepare majors and minors to function effectively in a foreign language by offering courses in literature, culture, linguistics, pedagogy and language for professional purposes.

The department's learning outcomes align to the department's mission. Our graduates are expected to reach an advanced level of proficiency¹ in both speaking and writing. Additionally, in order to perform effectively in a foreign language and culture, our graduates are expected to write, at the advanced level, in various styles, describe and explain cultural practices associated with the language, and analyze literary or cultural products in the target language.

Curriculum

The Department of Foreign Languages offers Certificates of Proficiency in ASL, Chinese, French, German, Japanese, and Spanish; Associate of Arts degrees in ASL, Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Spanish, and Localization; and Bachelor of Arts degrees in French, German, Spanish, and Spanish Translation. Students can also minor in French, German, Japanese, Localization, Spanish, and interdisciplinary fields such European Studies and Latin American Studies. The coursework that makes up these degrees is varied and proficiency-based, meaning that all courses in the Department of Foreign Languages have as one of their objectives the development of proficiency in the target language. Exceptions apply to certain courses in the Localization, European Studies, and Latin American Studies programs.

¹ To determine language proficiency the department adheres to the guidelines published by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. See the [ACTFL website](#) for their [guidelines](#).

As the department's Student Learning Outcomes are based on skills, not on content mastery, students may choose from a variety of programs and courses, in each of which they can develop language proficiency, writing skills, analysis skills, and cultural awareness. For example, for each of the three languages for which we offer bachelor's degrees, there are three emphases: 1) traditional, 2) commercial, and 3) teaching. In addition, in order to allow students to meet the department's student learning outcomes in a variety of contexts, we offer a substantial selection of variable title courses. The catalog lists these courses with a generic title, such as FL 3690 – Literature: Special Topics in Literature, or FL 3680 – Literature: Film, and then in a particular semester the number will be listed in the class schedule with a more specific title, such as FRCH 3690 – Gothic Marriage; or SPAN 3680 – Spanish Cinema. The two required core courses are offered frequently enough to allow students to finish a degree in a reasonable amount of time.

Since the inauguration of the Bridge Program for Advanced Language Learning in 2016–2017, the department has offered DLI Bridge courses in Spanish, Chinese, and French at several high schools across three school districts in Northern Utah. These courses are offered to 10th, 11th, and 12th graders who come from a K–9 DLI programs and who have passed the AP Exam with a score of 3 or higher. Although a DLI Bridge Course is three credit hours, it is taught over the course of a full academic year, and credit will count towards a major or minor in the language. The university faculty member is the instructor of record, and they typically teach at the high school site once a week.

Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment

In keeping with its mission statement, the Department of Foreign Languages has defined the following student learning outcomes, on which graduating seniors are assessed each year:

Learning Outcomes	Evidence
Graduating majors will:	Students will:
1. Demonstrate speaking and listening proficiency in the language they are studying.	Take an oral test administered on a computer.
2. Demonstrate writing ability, including a command of grammar and appropriate usage to express their ideas.	(This skill will be evaluated based on documents submitted for outcomes 3, 4 and 5).
3. Demonstrate the ability to write in different styles.	Submit at least three documents written in at least three different styles. Students will label each document with their determination of its style.
4. Write an analysis of a literary or cultural work in the language.	Submit a written analysis of a literary or cultural work. (What qualifies as a “literary work” may be interpreted broadly).

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| 5. Describe and explain aspects of the culture(s) of the language being studied. | Submit one sample of their work (written paper, film, pamphlet, etc.) in which they describe or explain an aspect of a target culture. |
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The Department of Foreign Languages currently assesses its graduating majors (in their final semester) and its core General Education course (FL 2020 HU). Formal assessment of concurrent enrollment courses has begun this academic year and we should have some data by the end of the year. The department also has plans to assess other programs and courses such as the Associate degrees and DLI Bridge courses.

The annual senior assessments reveal that our students generally meet or exceed our 75% threshold on outcomes 1 through 3, but that we need improvement in outcomes 4 and 5. In order for our students to meet or exceed the threshold on these outcomes, the department will need to better communicate expectations with instructors, and particularly define the kinds of writing expected from students in literature and culture classes. In addition, faculty will continue guiding students with collecting relevant artifacts to the intended standard in order to avoid a null submission.

The General Education assessments for all languages (French, German, Japanese, and Spanish) show that our students mostly meet the General Education learning outcomes for Humanities courses. When analyzed individually, the data shows that some languages, German and Japanese in particular, missed the mark for the percentage of students who met expectations. We attribute these shortcomings to a few factors, including interrater reliability, small sample size, and language difficulty. In future General Education assessments, we will explore the possibility of assessing in English, to ensure that possible discrepancies in proficiency do not complicate results.

Academic Advising

All full-time faculty share advising duties in the department. Students are required to meet with an advisor to declare and clear a major or minor, and the advisor submits declaration and clearance forms electronically to the department administrative assistant, who then enters the necessary information into the WSU computer system.

In fall 2019, a *Departmental Academic Advising Satisfaction Survey* was conducted. The survey reveals that foreign languages students, for the most part, are moderately or very satisfied with the quality of academic advising they have received in the department and agree that their advisor is competent and helpful. Most of the written comments were very positive and the department believes our advising strategy and processes are working well. The department plans to include the survey in the Senior Assessment from now on.

Faculty

The Department of Foreign Languages has a diverse and well-qualified faculty. The department currently has 11 full-time faculty. Nine faculty members are tenured, tenure-

track, or visiting, two fewer than at the time of our last review in 2014. Two faculty members are full-time, non-tenure track. We currently have one faculty member who runs all the major, minor, and AA programs in German. There are two faculty members for French, one for Japanese, and seven for Spanish.

The department also employs 15 to 20 adjunct faculty each semester, depending on specific needs. Adjunct faculty supplement our lower-division course instruction, and they also teach languages in which there is student interest but no degree program. Specifically, in 2019–20, there are three adjunct faculty teaching American Sign Language; two teaching Chinese; one teaching Italian; one teaching German; one teaching Japanese; one teaching the online methods course; ten teaching Spanish; and two teaching Translation & Localization.

The faculty of the Department of Foreign Languages is well-trained in methods of teaching foreign languages and in their respective fields. All faculty have received training on the [ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines](#) and the [World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages](#).² Our faculty's wide-ranging expertise allows the department to cover the extensive variety of programs and courses offered. In addition, the substantial diversity of the department faculty exposes students to a wide variety of accents, cultures, and perspectives, thus enhancing their ability to develop the global awareness and intercultural understanding that are part of our department's mission statement.

All full-time faculty and several of the adjunct faculty regularly participate in workshops, conferences, and training sessions to improve their teaching, and many of them travel regularly to attend and present at professional conferences. The department's talented full-time faculty have published articles in peer-reviewed journals, received awards, served on editorial boards of journals, and served in leadership positions in professional organizations at the local and national level.

Program Support

The department's administrative assistant and student aide are truly exceptional. In addition, the department receives excellent support from the library, the office of the Dean of the Lindquist College of Arts and Humanities, and other administrators and administrative staff.

Relations with External Community

The Department of Foreign Languages has a respectable relationship with other colleges and programs on campus and off campus. We regularly collaborate and work closely with entities such as [Study Abroad](#), [Honors Program](#), [Bachelor of Integrated Studies Program](#), [Center for Community Engaged Learning](#), [Career Services](#), [2+2 Programs](#) (Goddard School of Business & Economics), [Hurst Artist-in-Residence Advisory Board](#), and [Diversity and](#)

² Much of our program, including curriculum and assessment, is based on the principles taught in this training.

[Inclusive Programs](#) to name a few. We also have a long history of partnership with the [Division of Continuing Education](#). The department has participated in [Concurrent Enrollment](#) for 10+ years. In addition, WSU is one of the few institutions that has participated in the [Bridge Program for Advanced Language Learning](#) since its inauguration.

In addition, the department is well represented in state, regional, and national organizations. Our faculty are board members and hold leadership positions in organizations such as the [Utah Foreign Language Association](#), American Association of Teachers of Foreign Languages, the [National Hispanic Honor Society](#), and [Translation Commons](#) (a nonprofit online volunteer community).

Student, Faculty, Contract/Adjunct Faculty and Staff Statistics:

Foreign Languages	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19*
Student Credit Hours Total ¹	9,150	10,742	11,803	12,282	13,689
Student FTE Total ²	305.0	358.1	393.4	409.4	456.3
Student Majors ³					
Primary Majors	135	117	122	109	93
2nd/3rd Majors & Concentrations.	65	56	69	55	53
Associate Degree	10	24	49	45	45
Program Graduates ⁴					
Bachelor's degree	45	37	40	35	35
Associate Degree	24	40	83	79	60
Student Demographic Profile ⁵					
Female	54	50	70	78	67
Male	91	91	101	76	71
Faculty FTE Total ⁶	18.66	17.86	21.06	18.66	n/a
Adjunct FTE	7.45	7.26	7.95	7.1	n/a
Contract FTE	11.21	10.6	13.11	11.56	n/a
Student/Faculty Ratio ⁷	16.35	20.05	18.68	21.94	n/a

(Data provided by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness on August 13, 2019)

*Data for 2018-19 are preliminary findings and subject to change.

Results of Previous Program Reviews

The Department of Foreign Languages was last reviewed in the spring of 2014. The Program Review Team made recommendations about curriculum, assessment, and department strategic planning for retention and enrollment growth. Each of the recommendations has been addressed. However, further attention needs to be paid to 1) the assessment of programs and individual courses, i.e., Associate degrees and DLI Bridge

courses; 2) curricular improvement to better support our students' career pathways (for which an industry advisory committee has been formed). This year's self-study reveals the need to seek funding to support the programs in the department, student scholarships, and faculty development. It also reveals the need for improving marketing and PR at the department level.

Information Regarding Current Review Team Members

Name	Position	Affiliation	Contact information
Dr. Sally Shigley	Professor of English	Department of English, Lindquist College, WSU	sshigley@weber.edu (801-626-7760)
Dr. Jeff Steagall	Professor of Economics	Department of Economics, Goddard School of Business and Economics, WSU	jeffsteagall@weber.edu (801-626-6687)
Dr. Ray Clifford	Associate Dean and Director for the Center for Language Studies	College of Humanities, BYU	rayc@byu.edu (801-422-3263)