

Annual Report for Assessment of Outcomes 2012-13

Subject Area Committee Name: World Languages

Contact person: Kristi Tompkins

For LDC/DE: Core outcome(s) assessed: Communication

For CTE: Degree or certificate* assessed: _____

*please attach a table showing the alignment of the degree or certificate outcomes with the College Core Outcomes

Please address the questions below and send to learningassessment@pcc.edu by **June 21, 2013** with Annual Report in the subject line

Note: Information provided in this report may be inserted into or summarized in Section 2C Program Review Outline.

1. Describe changes that have been implemented towards improving students' attainment of outcomes that resulted from recent outcome assessments. These may include but are not limited to changes to content, materials, instruction, pedagogy etc. Please be sure to **describe the connection** between the assessment results and the changes made.

For each outcome assessed this year:

2. Describe the assessment design (tool and processes) used. Include relevant information about:
 - The nature of the assessment (e.g., written work, project, portfolio, exam, survey, performance etc.) and if it is direct (assesses evidence mastery of outcomes) or indirect (student's perception of mastery). Please give rationale for indirect assessments (direct assessments are preferable).
 - The student sample assessed (including sample size relative to the targeted student population for the assessment activity) process and rationale for selection of the student sample. Why was this group of students and/or courses chosen?
 - Any rubrics, checklists, surveys or other tools that were used to evaluate the student work. (Please include with your report – OK to include in appendix). Where appropriate, identify benchmarks.
 - How you analyzed results, including steps taken to ensure that results are reliable (consistent from one evaluator to another).
3. Provide information about the results (i.e., what did you learn about how well students are meeting the outcomes)?
 - If scored (e.g., if a rubric or other scaled tool is used), please report the data, and relate to any appropriate benchmarks.
 - Results should be broken down in a way that is meaningful and useful for making improvements to teaching/learning. Please show those specific results.

4. Identify any changes that should, as a result of this assessment, be implemented to help improve students' attainment of outcomes. (These may include, but are not limited to, changes in curriculum, content, materials, instruction, pedagogy etc).

5. Reflect on the effectiveness of this assessment tool and assessment process. Please describe any changes to assessment methodology that would lead to more meaningful results if this assessment were to be repeated (or adapted to another outcome). Is there a different kind of assessment tool or process that the SAC would like to use for this outcome in the future? If the assessment tool and processes does not need to be revised, please indicate this.

Assessment of Core Outcomes

Communication Competency

World Language SAC report 2012-13

1. Changes: *Describe changes that have been implemented towards improving students' attainment of outcomes that resulted from recent outcome assessments. These may include but are not limited to changes to content, materials, instruction, pedagogy etc. Please be sure to describe the connection between the assessment results and the changes made.*

In the 2011 – 2012 academic year, the World Languages SAC assessed two core outcomes: Community and Environmental Awareness and Self-Reflection. As a result of these assessments, we held a special in-service at the beginning of this academic year, on October 18th, 2012, to discuss already-implemented as well as planned changes to our curriculum. Instructors reported having made changes to the content, materials and instruction of their first and second year language courses in order to improve students' attainment of these outcomes.

Community and Environmental Awareness:

To assess student outcomes for Community and Environmental Responsibility, the World Language SAC created a direct assessment survey and a rubric. Students in the last class in the sequence of our second year language classes completed a survey in English in which they listed social and/or environment issues that they learned about in their language class. (We were very specific with students that they could only list issues that had been discussed in their language class, so that we could see what they had learned inside out classrooms, not outside.) Then students were asked to write paragraphs about what they thought might be potential causes and solutions to those problems, ways that people in the target-language speaking community might get involved with solving these problems, and, finally, any involvement that the student has had in helping to solve the issues raised. 107 out of 321 enrolled students completed this survey. Although we were pleased that students mentioned a wide range of social and/or environmental issues, there was still some room for improvement. As a result we have implemented the following:

- We established a plan to increase communication among instructors about curriculum.
 - Each language has planned a meeting to discuss which social and environmental issues to consistently incorporate at each language level, across the district.
 - The Spanish instructors started a site through Desire to Learn for curriculum and materials sharing, and other languages will soon be able to create a similar space on the platform. Every instructor gets administrative access to upload and share activities.
- We strengthened our resolve to deepen our students' connection to the local community.
 - We heard a presentation from the SY service-learning faculty coordinator about best practices in creating service-learning assignments.
 - We have increased our promotion of community events (involving immigrant communities) to students. This is done on an informal basis – as one instructor hears about an event (i.e. international women's day), she forwards the information to the SAC to share with students.

- Rock Creek Spanish department decided to offer (for the first time in many years) Hispanic Culture through Film in Spring 2013, which will deal directly with many of the community and social issues of Latin America.
- Many Spanish instructors have incorporated a new assignment called “cultural encounters” in which students go out into Latino community (i.e. visit a Latino grocery store, attend a bilingual theater production, interview a native Spanish-speaking friend, etc.) and then answer specific questions about what they learned.
- FT Chinese instructor Hsio-Yun and FT Spanish instructor Alejandra Bonifacino joined the 2012-2013 service-learning faculty cohort in a commitment to incorporate service-learning into future classes.
- Students in Spanish, French, and German have increased their participation in level 1-3 ESOL tutoring service-learning projects, in which they gain valuable insights into the issues facing local immigrant communities.
- We developed new activities to incorporate environmental issues into classes.
 - We shared ideas for specific songs to use in class that deal with environmental issues
 - We shared ideas for including environmental issues into regular activities (i.e. - when students learn vocabulary for discussing daily routines, we include water and electricity usage.)
 - The French department switched to a new first year textbook that incorporates more readings and videos on environmental and social issues. (The Spanish department has been using the Spanish version of this same textbook, and reaffirmed their commitment to it.)
 - The Russian second year textbook has been revised to incorporate environmental issues into course readings.
 - Japanese department organized two events to educate, inform, and commemorate the 2011 tsunami.

Self-Reflection

To assess student outcomes for Self Reflection, the World Language SAC created a direct pre and post assessment survey and a rubric. Students in Fall 2011 first year language classes completed a pre survey in English that enabled instructors to rate a student’s level of self reflection that pertain to their language learning strategies, their ability to value and challenge assumptions about new learning experiences and their willingness to think beyond the classroom to how they might interact with the target culture both locally and/or abroad. The results of the pre assessment survey were then compared to a post assessment survey that was administered to Spring 2012 second year language classes. While most of our students are reaching a level 3 upon completion of the second year language program, there is definitely room for improvement. Below are some of the changes we implemented as a result of these assessment results:

- We explicitly teach students study strategies for languages.
 - Whereas before, we assumed students would “pick up” on good strategies, we have now created (and shared) methods, materials, and strategies for directly teaching learning strategies. These include a first day of class activity (with a Powerpoint slideshow that has been shared within our SAC), techniques for having students discuss how they study, work with the textbook, write about study strategies in the margins as students complete assignments, and approach comprehension activities, etc.
 - We have incorporated the use of student surveys periodically during the term to find out how they are studying.
 - Some instructors implemented a new activity in which 103 students write letter to a new 101 student telling him/her how to best approach language learning (especially the immersion process).
- We have implemented activities to prompt self-reflection on class expectations.
 - These involve the use of student surveys in classes on the first day of class. Students write about their goals, their expectations for themselves and for the instructor.
- We have implemented activities to prompt self-reflection on students’ own progress in the language.
 - At the beginning of each chapter, we now explicitly discuss goals of the chapter with students. What do they expect they’ll be able to do? What do they hope to learn?
 - Many instructors have begun incorporating self-assessments on chapter goals to see if students can recognize if they’ve met the goals or not.
 - Many instructors have translated course and chapter objectives into student language by creating “I can…” lists for each chapter. Students check off what they can do.

2. Assessment design: *Describe the assessment design (tool and processes) used.*

This year, we opted to assess students’ written communication (as opposed to spoken, which we assessed in 2010-2011), in order to focus on a different component of their communication competency. Additionally, written communication is more easily assessed at a district-wide level.

To assess students’ communication competency, we chose to focus on writing and used a direct assessment tool. We used an external assessment instrument called the STAMP test (Standards-Based Measurement of Proficiency). This instrument is a standardized test that measures students’ writing proficiency according to the standards established by the American Council for Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). This assessment instrument is well-known and respected in the language teaching profession, and is currently used by Portland Public Schools and the Beaverton School District to measure student progress. Results are archived within the secure website for five years. The writing prompts in the STAMP test closely

mimic the types of assignments we give in our language classes at PCC. For the assessment, each student responds to three communicative writing prompts that may be found in a real-world situation (eg: write an introduction letter to a host family). The difficulty of the writing prompt is determined by the student's performance on the comprehension section of the STAMP test. **Appendix 1** lists more sample writing prompts.

We wanted to see what level of communicative proficiency students achieved at the end of our sequence. Thus, all language sections across the district of 203 or 251 implemented this assessment instrument in Spring '12 or Spring '11. Because there were absences on assessment day, as well as some students who ran out of time when completing the assessment, the actual number of students assessed was 253 students out of a total of 343 enrolled (74%). The only exception was Russian, as no STAMP test currently exists for Russian. Results from all 253 students are included in our final report.

The students' writing samples were assessed by external, trained raters (most of whom are retired language teachers) using specific rubrics based on the proficiency guidelines established by the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), with a 90% inter-rater reliability.

Appendix 2 includes the detailed rubric.

3. Results: Below are the empirical data from the assessment:

CHINESE: *9 students participated and completed the assessment out of 11 enrolled (81%)*

Level 4+ = 3 students (33%)

Level 4 = 4 (44%)

Level 3 = 2 (22%)

JAPANESE: *37 students participated and completed the assessment out of 45 registered (82%)*

Level 4 = 6 students (16%)

Level 3 = 27 (73%)

Level 2 = 3 (8%)

Level 1 = 1 (3%)

GERMAN: 37 students participated and completed the assessment out of 42 enrolled (88%)

Level 4 = 1 student (2.7%)

Level 3 = 16 (43.2%)

Level 2 = 19 (51.4%)

Level 1 = 1 (2.7%)

FRENCH: 59 students participated and completed the assessment out of 82 enrolled (72%)

Level 3 = 30 students (52%)

Level 2 = 27 (45%)

Level 1 = 2 (3%)

SPANISH: 111 students participated and completed the assessment out of 163 enrolled (68%)

Level 4 = 23 students (20.7%)

Level 3 = 76 (68.4%)

Level 2 = 12 (10.8%)

Summary:

It is important to note that languages scored differently because of the varying degrees of difficulty of languages. This variance is based on data from the most highly regarded language-teaching institute in the country, the Defense Language Institute for Military Training, part of the Foreign Service Institute. This is an intensive language training program for skilled language learners with advanced degrees. Please see appendix 3 for a detailed list of the five categories of language difficulty.

N.B. Please note that Russian is not included, as there is no STAMP test for that language.

Chinese & Japanese (category 5 in difficulty, with 1 being the easiest):

46 students participated

- Level 4+ = 3 students (6.5%)
- Level 4 = 10 (22%)
- Level 3 = 28 (61%)
- Level 2 = 3 (6.5%)
- Level 1 = 1 (2%)

German (category 2 in difficulty)

37 students participated

- Level 4 = 1 student (3%)
- Level 3 = 16 (43%)
- Level 2 = 19 (51%)
- Level 1 = 1 (3%)

Spanish & French (category 1 in difficulty)

170 students participated

- Level 4 = 23 students (13.5%)
- Level 3 = 106 (62%)
- Level 2 = 39 (23%)
- Level 1 = 2(1%)

4. Suggestions for improvement to teaching: *Identify any changes that should, as a result of this assessment, be implemented to help improve students' attainment of outcomes.*

We were surprised by the high levels achieved by our students. Such results have encouraged our SAC to continue to use oral interviews to assess students' levels of oral proficiency in the language on a regular basis. However, we have also taken steps to incorporate a greater variety of modes and methods of communication in both daily classroom activities and assessments in order to help students improve accuracy and confidence in different communication settings. For example, along with the above-mentioned oral interviews, some instructors have introduced informal in-class oral presentations on culturally relevant topics, the use of online interactive voice tools (such as with Wimba), and increased listening comprehension practice. In the skill areas of reading and writing, some differences in results across languages have prompted some instructors to incorporate purposeful writing at an earlier stage (beginning in the first term) and have prompted others to include a written communication outcome for every unit of the term. While the overall results are certainly encouraging, they have prompted some discussions in our SAC about whether our expectations are too high in writing, or whether we are over-emphasizing writing ability at the expense of other language abilities in our second-year classes.

5. Effectiveness of this assessment tool: *Reflect on the effectiveness of this assessment tool and assessment process. Please describe any changes to assessment methodology that would lead to more meaningful results if this assessment were to be repeated (or adapted to another outcome).*

We are pleased with this assessment tool for the following reasons:

- it allows us to include the results from 75% of students enrolled in 203/251
- the standardized format allows consistency and 90% inter-rater reliability
- the externally scored results are unbiased
- results are archived for 5 years and can be referenced for program design

Some of the drawbacks from this tool include:

- the standardized format is unfamiliar to students, thus may have affected results.

- the results are holistic and do not provide information about students' specific strengths and weaknesses on a detailed level.

Ideally, we would like to collect a hand-written essay from all students and score them according to a singular rubric. However, this is more realistic at the classroom assessment level. At the district, multi-language level, such an assessment would be extremely difficult to design and implement. Therefore we do not at present intend to revise our assessment tool.

Appendix 1: Sample writing prompts from STAMP test instrument

Note: Prompts for all languages were similar. Included below are samples from Spanish.

Sample prompts that elicited a level 3 response:

1. *You just had your birthday in Spain and got several gifts from your friends and host family. You want to remember who gave you which gifts. Write in Spanish in your travel journal about your birthday. Be sure to include a description of what took place and describe at least 4 gifts that you received and who gave them to you.*
2. *You've just arrived in Madrid, where you'll be spending a year as an exchange student. Your host sister has warned you that you will probably be expected to introduce yourself to the class on your first day of school. You're a little nervous, so you decide to prepare a notecard in Spanish of some things that you could say about yourself by way of introduction. Include at least 4 of the following topics in your notes:*
 - your name and age*
 - your year in school (grade)*
 - where you are from in the U.S.*
 - a list of your family members and their names*
 - one or two of your favorite activities or interests*
3. *You are going to have a party at your house and would like to invite a few of your friends from your class. Write an email in Spanish in which you announce:*
 - the party*
 - the day and time (write out numbers)*
 - the location (your house)*
 - at least four things you'll have at the party (food / drinks / music / dancing / etc.)*
4. *While you are living in Peru on a study abroad program, you are taking an art history class. Tomorrow you will be leaving on a three-day trip to visit many museums and some local artisan communities. Write a note to your host mother explaining that you will be leaving for three days. Ask her to help you locate at least five articles of clothing that you will need and let her know what other things you might need to get ready for the trip. Be as detailed as possible with your description of the clothing articles.*
5. *You just had your birthday in Spain and got several gifts from your friends and host family. You want to remember who gave you which gifts. Write in Spanish in your travel journal*

about your birthday. Be sure to include a description of what took place and describe at least 4 gifts that you received and who gave them to you.

- 6. You've been living in Spain for a few months, and your birthday is coming up. As part of the celebration, your host family has offered to make anything you want for dinner. Write a message to your host mother to let her know of at least 4 things you would like to eat/drink on your birthday. Be as detailed as possible and write in complete sentences. (American brand names such as Pepsi, Oreos, McDonalds, etc. will NOT be accepted.)*

Sample prompts that elicited a level 4 response:

- 1. After visiting some friends in Madrid, you are back at home. Write a letter in Spanish to your friends in Madrid, thanking them for their hospitality. Be sure to include:
thanks for their hospitality
what you enjoyed most about your stay
a description of your trip home
an invitation for them to come visit and stay with you
any other information you can think of.*
- 2. You are living with a host family in Venezuela and just received an invitation to go out for the evening with some friends. Leave your host family a note in which you tell them that you won't be home for dinner because you are going out with friends. In your note you should:
apologize for missing dinner
explain where you are going
tell them with whom you are going out
mention when you expect to be back*
- 3. As the only Spanish speaker in your family, you are browsing the Internet looking for a suitable hotel for your family's upcoming vacation in Spain. You've found a hotel that seems suitable, so write an email in Spanish, making arrangements for the entire family. Your message should include:
a general greeting and a detailed description of what you are looking for
number of persons
date of arrival
length of stay
type of room(s) you would like
ask at least one question about the hotel (location, features, prices, etc.)*
- 4. You are thinking about applying to a study abroad program in Mexico City. Write an email to the program director, requesting information. Be sure to include the following (please DO NOT use actual personal information):
your name and where you live
• where you currently attend school
• what you are interested in studying and why
• when you plan on attending*

- request information about the program
- close appropriately (thank you, etc).

5. While you are traveling over the weekend, you have become sick. Luckily, you have your host mother's email address with you. Write a detailed message to her in Spanish in which you:

tell her that you are not feeling well

describe your symptoms

ask your host mother what to do and perhaps what medication would be best to take for your symptoms

6. You and your friend from Monterey are planning to meet in Mexico City and take a vacation together. You want to travel to a resort near Acapulco, but your friend wants to stay in Mexico City. Send your friend an email in which you compare a vacation in the big city and a vacation at the beach, and try to convince your friend to go to the beach resort with you (or you can reverse the roles, if you prefer). Your points of comparison should include at least three of the following topics:

weather

recreational and sports activities

food & leisure activities (restaurants, theater, museums, etc.)

accommodations

price

7. While you are living in Mexico City one of your favorite bands is going to be performing there. You want to invite a friend of yours to go with you. Write an email in which you try to persuade him to buy a ticket and attend the concert with you. You may want to include each of the following elements in your email:

greet your friend

• *tell your friend about the concert and invite him*

• *tell him a little about the band and their music...be persuasive in how you describe the band and the music*

• *tell him when and where it is*

• *discuss how you will get there*

• *ask him to respond*

Appendix 2: Rubric used by STAMP

<p>Level 1</p> <p>(Corresponds to ACTFL level NM)</p> <p>Limited demonstration or application of knowledge and skills.</p>	<p>Language production is beyond simple words, but clearly shows the lack of ability to construct simple sentences.</p> <p>May make frequent errors, but usually comprehensible to a reader familiar with language learners. Influence from student's first language may be present.</p>
<p>Level 2</p> <p>(Corresponds to ACTFL level NH)</p> <p>Basic demonstration and application of knowledge and skills.</p>	<p>Short, common expressions or memorized statements that may be combined together. Able to create at least two complete simple sentences.</p> <p>Good accuracy for high frequency expressions. Usually comprehensible to a reader familiar with language learners. Grammatical (syntax, spelling, conjugation) errors are expected at this level, but sentences must make sense to be acceptable.</p>
<p>Level 3</p> <p>(Corresponds to ACTFL level IL)</p> <p>Intermediate demonstration and application of knowledge and skills.</p>	<p>Variety of sentences that utilize different verbs to create independent thoughts mostly composed of a recombination of learned simple sentences with some added detail.</p> <p>Good accuracy with formulaic sentences with some added detail. Errors may occur as student attempts higher-level skills. Good language control is expected with the majority of responses.</p>
<p>Level 4</p> <p>(corresponds with ACTFL level IM)</p> <p>Advanced demonstration and application of</p>	<p>Logical organization of ideas and flow of sentences or statements. The lower end must have at least 3 unique and non-formulaic sentences while the upper end is moving toward connected sentences with complexity, syntactical control and limited errors.</p>

knowledge and skills.	Good accuracy evident with possible errors that don't affect the overall meaning. Delivery may be somewhat choppy. May have repetitive use of concrete vocabulary with occasional use of expanding terms. Accuracy for complex sentences is emerging.
Level 4+ (corresponds with ACTFL level IH)	<p>Able to demonstrate a pre-advanced control of the language. Complexity is evident. Transition words and connectors are used correctly and efficiently most of the time to create a flow within the response. The response contains groups of sentences that focus on different aspects of the prompt, and includes transition words or phrases that often introduce the next concept. However, the response does not have adequate inclusion of advanced vocabulary to be considered Advanced.</p> <p>For the most part, the response is well written and well constructed. The sentence structures show pre-advanced skill and demonstrate that the student is feeling more comfortable creating a coherent response (groupings accurately stated, transition words and phrases, etc.). There may still be errors, but the errors would not be with basic grammar or vocabulary, or may show a pattern of errors with more complex grammar structures. These errors would indicate a response that is nearing Advanced level of control.</p>

Appendix 3: Language Difficulty Ranking by the Foreign Service Institute

Hours listed represent amount of instruction needed to achieve a level 3 on ILR scale (=Advanced Low on ACTFL scale)

In our two-year language program PCC students get a total of 300 instructional hours (30credits). However, our students are not operating within the ideal, distraction-free conditions of the Defense Language Institute, nor are they skilled language learners with advanced degrees.

Category I: 23-24 weeks (575-600 hours)

Languages closely related to English

Afrikaans
Danish
Dutch
French
Italian

Norwegian
Portuguese
Romanian
Spanish
Swedish

Category II: 30 weeks (750 hours)

Languages similar to English

German**Category III: 36 weeks (900 hours)**

Languages with linguistic and/or cultural differences from English

IndonesianMalaysianSwahili**Category IV: 44 weeks (1100 hours)**

Languages with significant linguistic and/or cultural differences from English

AlbanianAmharicArmenianAzerbaijaniBengaliBosnianBulgarianBurmeseCroatianCzech*Estonian*Finnish*GeorgianGreekHebrewHindi*HungarianIcelandicKhmerLaoLatvianLithuanianMacedonian*MongolianNepaliPashtoPersian (Dari, Farsi, Tajik)PolishRussianSerbianSinhalaSlovakSlovenianTagalog*ThaiTurkishUkrainianUrduUzbek*VietnameseXhosaZulu**Category V: 88 weeks (2200 hours)**

Languages which are exceptionally difficult for native English speakers

ArabicCantonese (Chinese)Mandarin (Chinese)*JapaneseKorean

* Languages preceded by asterisks are usually more difficult for native English speakers to learn than other languages in the same category.