

**UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO**  
**College of Arts and Sciences**

**French Studies—Program Assessment Plan**

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**Program Goals**

To communicate clearly and effectively in French, both in written and oral discourse

Defined: To achieve a common minimum of Intermediate High (for language production, i.e. speaking (a) and writing (b), as well as a minimum of Advanced (for language comprehension, i.e. listening (c) and reading (d) based on ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines.

**Program Learning Outcomes**

- Speaking: Graduates will express information and opinions in French in a consistent, effective and clear French.
- Writing: Graduates will write coherently in French using the disciplinary conventions and methodologies that constitute effective literary and cultural analysis.
- Listening: Graduates will understand connected oral discourse on a variety of issues produced by native speakers from different places and times.
- Reading: Graduates will demonstrate a critical competence to identify, interpret, and evaluate the main ideas and formal features of literary texts and formal artifacts from all periods and genres, showing some sensitivity to the plurality of meanings they offer.

**Curriculum Map**

Goals/Outcomes	Course Numbers									
	FRN 202	FRN 300	FRN 320	FRN 322	FRN 324	FRN 330	FRN 332	FRN 440*	FRN 450*	FRN** 250/260 340/350
<b>1. To communicate clearly and effectively in French, both in written and oral discourse</b>										
a. Speaking: Graduates will express information and opinions in French in a consistent, effective, and clear French.	I	M	M	M	M	M	C	C	C	
b. Writing: Graduates will write coherently in French using the disciplinary conventions and methodologies that constitute effective literary and cultural analysis.	I	M	M	M	M	M	C	C	C	C
c. Listening: Graduates will understand connected oral discourse on a variety of issues produced by native speakers from different places and times.	I	M	M	M	M	M	C	C	C	C

d. Reading: Graduates will demonstrate a critical competence to identify and evaluate the main ideas of literary texts and formal artifacts from all periods, genres, showing some sensitivity to the plurality of meanings they offer.	I	M	M	M	M	M	C	C	C	M
<b>2. To demonstrate a concrete knowledge of major artistic works and figures of the French-speaking world.</b> <b>Graduates will exhibit the ability to:</b>										
a. Apply analytical skills to the interpretation of a wide spectrum of cultural phenomena, including literature, art, music, film and popular media.		M	M	M	M	M	C	C	C	C
b. Identify major artistic and cultural figures of the French-speaking world and their principal works and influence.			C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
c. Situate the Arts in the context of their historical, cultural, and aesthetic traditions, while recognizing the limitations of such categorizations.		M	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
<b>3. To respect difference and diversity, both in the context of their own culture and globally.</b> <b>Graduates will be able to:</b>										
a. Demonstrate an awareness of the linguistic, ethnic, racial, religious, cultural and social diversity of France, the Francophone world, and Francophone communities within the US.	C	M	M	M	M	M	C	C	C	C
b. Recognize and respect difference by engaging in the perspective of others to better understand and critically reflect on a more complex worldview.	C	M	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
c. Discuss contemporary issues related to France, the Francophone world in their historical contexts.	M	M	I	I	I	I	I	C	C	C
<b>4. To develop an intellectual engagement, introspection and reflective sensibility that will contribute to their life-long learning.</b> <b>Graduates will be able to:</b>										
a. Reflect upon how the analysis of artistic works within their cultural contexts encourages creative thinking.	I	M	M	M	M	M	M	C	C	C
b. Adapt the knowledge and skills they have learned to new experiences and learning opportunities.	C	M	M	M	M	M	M	C	C	C
c. Develop an appreciation for and a life-long interest in French-speaking cultures.	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	C	C	C

**Key** I = Introduced  
M = Moderate Coverage  
C = Comprehensive Coverage

\* Special Topic Seminars  
\*\* Culture course

**Performance Rubrics:**

	<b>Very Poor Achievement of Outcome</b>	<b>Average Achievement of Outcome</b>	<b>Very Good Achievement of Outcome</b>
a. Speaking	Students can interact with native speakers but there is a strong interference from English, and misunderstandings are frequent. Students feel most comfortable talking about personal matters.	Students can initiate, sustain and conclude conversations on personal, cultural and academic matters with native speakers in their own communities (either abroad, through service learning, or in informal encounters on and off campus). Their speech may contain pauses, reformulations and self-corrections as they search for the adequate words	Students can explain complex ideas in detail using precise vocabulary and intonation patterns. There is little interference from English.
b. Writing	Students' writing often shows lack of fluency due to systematic grammatical errors, misuse of words, and spelling mistakes. Syntax is poor consisting of recombinations of learned vocabulary and structures into simple sentences.	Students can frame and sustain an argument that includes both the exposition and explanation of information, even when there is only partial control of complex structures. They are attentive to questions of structure and style in their written work, but transitions and cohesive devices are still limited.	Students' writing incorporates a wide range of expressions and rhetorical forms with attention to register and finer shades of meaning. Some misuse of vocabulary may still be evident, but in general there is little interference from English.
c. Listening	Students' understanding is uneven which causes them to often miss main ideas when interaction is not face-to-face and on familiar topics.	Students can synthesize the main ideas of extended conversation, audiovisual materials, and academic lectures.	Students can follow the general lines of more complex arguments, provided the topic is reasonably familiar.
d. Reading	Students need guidance to understand literary excerpts and longer texts from a variety of sources.	Students are able to read and understand texts from a variety of sources and understand literary texts from different genres.	Students begin to discern writers' attitudes and viewpoints. They may understand texts in varying literary styles of greater length and complexity.

**Possible measurement methods:**

- NEW Placement Exam\*
- Course embedded assignments: oral presentations, compositions, tests (with and without oral component), journals and/or blogs, conversation groups, class discussions and homework.
- Discussions in the classroom are conducted exclusively in French. Readings, writing assignments and exams are also all in French.
- Extracurricular activities such as Conversation Tables, tutoring through the French Writing Center (FWC) help reinforce spoken interaction and writing techniques, respectively.

\*We believe that a new online Placement Exam is needed for the implementation of the French program's assessment plan, and most particularly Goal 1. The exam will serve several purposes within our program: as placement test for incoming students, as entry test to French Majors, and as measurement of the goals we have designed for our graduates. Our current Placement Test, although recently updated to become accessible to students on-line, does not fully evaluate reading comprehension, listening, and writing. The current exam lacks the necessary rigor for evaluating the overall communicative skills of our students at the different levels described.

**Who will do the assessment?**

The Coordinator of the French Language Program would coordinate this process for all of our incoming students. In addition, every student that declares a major in French should meet with his or her advisor after taking the Placement Exam to discuss future coursework and/or needed improvements in pertinent areas (speaking, writing, listening and reading) before signing for core courses. Finally, all graduates would be required to take the placement exam in the last semester of their Senior year, initially for the sake of assessing the needs of our program, though perhaps as an exit exam in the future. A faculty member (on a rotating basis) could then write a summary of the results and inform those in our program of the best possible improvements that should be made.

**How will data be used to improve the program or revise curricula?**

After the new Placement Test has been implemented, all incoming students and declared majors have been tested at the beginning and end of each semester for a full academic year, a careful review of the scores and proficiency levels of our majors and graduates will allow us to determine more clearly what path we ought to take to improve the classroom learning environment. Some possible outcomes include: adding one semester of language instruction to the Major; developing more language-intensive courses in immersion; emphasizing specialized training of our adjunct faculty as we strive for establishing similar learning outcomes for all sections of a given course. In addition, we may need to adjust the desired proficiency levels of our graduating seniors.

- To demonstrate a concrete knowledge of major artistic works and figures of the French-speaking world  
Defined: To demonstrate a basic critical ability to identify and evaluate the ideas and formal features of major artistic works and figures, the contexts in which they are produced, and the perspectives they represent.

**Measurable Outcomes:**

- a. Apply analytical skills to the interpretation of a wide spectrum of cultural phenomena, including literature, art, music, film and popular media
- b. Identify major artistic and cultural figures of the French-speaking world and their principal works
- c. Situate the Arts in the context of their historical, cultural, and aesthetic traditions, while recognizing the limitations of such categorizations.

**Performance Rubrics:**

	<b>Very Poor Achievement of Outcome</b>	<b>Average Achievement of Outcome</b>	<b>Very Good Achievement of Outcome</b>
a.	Students still struggle when trying to analyze complex material; a dependence on book report versus argument and an inability to develop their own thesis when ask to write or discuss independent ideas.	Students can evaluate texts through a range of critical approaches and can apply analytical strategies (learned through literary analysis) to non-literary texts of the French -speaking world, including news media, film, advertisements, visual arts, performance, etc. Students can develop and carry out independent reading and research beyond the knowledge and understanding provided in the classroom.	Students can evaluate the function of different stylistic devices within a text and can uncover nuanced and multilayered meanings and complexities of a text (or artistic work) through various modes of inquiry. They can begin to assess competing claims of interpretation of a text or other work or art independently and with confidence.
b.	Students have only the most cursory understanding of essential works and figures within the French or Francophone world. Mistake in differentiating between Francophone cultures occur often.	Students demonstrates an understanding of major artistic works and figures as well as the essential characteristics of the trends, periods, movements and names within the French and Francophone intellectual traditions that influence them. .	Students demonstrate a depth of knowledge and breadth of the major artistic works and figures from the French and/or Francophone world.
c.	Students blur essential distinctions between Francophone countries and cultures. A lack of sophisticated thought is often linked to sloppiness, disinterest and repetitive errors in argument.	Students recognize key terms specific to the French-speaking world. They can compare and contrast artistic works from different eras, including those that represent important trends and movements from the same period, while also demonstrating knowledge of the significant events that have impacted French and Francophone cultures across the centuries. They are aware by now that conventions and canons may be questioned.	Students regularly show a command of recognizing particularities of individual intellectual traditions within the French or Francophone world.

### **Possible measurement methods:**

- Course embedded assignments: weekly writing samples, term papers, midterm and final exams (short and essay questions) and in-class oral presentations. Substantive research papers at the 400 level.
- Terminology and critical approaches are introduced in FRN 320 and reinforced subsequently.
- Majors take a minimum of six courses, equally distributed between literature and culture of France and/or French-speaking countries, and/or with a declared emphasis (Africa, Islands, Québec).
- Syllabi Analyses (once major is reconfigured\*.)

Although the specifics of the French program differ from the Spanish program as French is not a “Foreign National Language” in the US, it could certainly benefit from recommendations made by the MLA Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Languages arguing for “a more unified approach to a four-year curriculum that seeks to situate language study in its cultural, historical, geographic, and cross-cultural frames” (*Profession*, 2007-239).

The French curriculum offers two non-literature core courses over a rotation of four to six semesters, (French Culture and Civilization; French Culture for Business), it is true that, much like the Spanish program, the structure of our current French Major follows the “standard configuration of university foreign language curricula, in which a two-year language sequence feeds into a set of core courses primarily focused on [the] canonical literature” (236). In our program such canons include French and Francophone authors as separate entities. It would be advisable to rethink the configuration of the Major and our courses so that our students can perceive a broader and more culturally diverse curriculum, one that incorporates the language and the distinct cultures of the French-speaking world, in France and Francophone countries. This will allow us to assess our goals more efficiently.

### **Who will do the assessment?**

To this end, all three full-time members of the faculty in the French program should meet twice during the fall 2008, first to discuss how to reconfigure the Major and a second time to approve a new design as well as to make the necessary amendments to this assessment plan.

### **How will data be used to improve the program or revise curricula?**

Based on the titles of our courses it is clear that our focus is on literature, either French or Francophone 1 and 2, which refer to the literatures of Africa (1) and outside of Africa (2). As part of the assessment of the French major, upper-division courses should be reconfigured to reflect the cross-cultural inquiry and multiple subject matters that reflect the French-speaking world of today.

- To respect difference and diversity, both in the context of their own culture and globally  
Defined: To demonstrate a basic understanding of, and respect toward several of the many cultures of French speakers in their varied dimensions (social, historical, political, religious, economic, linguistic and artistic).

### **Measurable Outcomes:**

- a. Demonstrate an awareness of the linguistic, ethnic, racial, religious, cultural and social diversity of France, the Francophone world, and the US
- b. Recognize and respect differences by engaging the perspective of others to better understand and critically reflect on a more complex world view
- c. Discuss contemporary issues related to France, the Francophone world and the US in their historical contexts

### **Performance Rubrics:**

	<b>Very Poor Achievement of Outcome</b>	<b>Average Achievement of Outcome</b>	<b>Very Good Achievement of Outcome</b>
a.	Students are unaware of the principal customs, patterns of thought, beliefs and values of French and Francophone cultures; indifference is an ongoing problem and challenge.	Students show an awareness of relationships between ethnicity, race, religion, culture, history, politics, and economics in the production of artistic works.	Students demonstrate a detailed knowledge and clear understanding of one or more of the cultures associated with French.
b.	Students show a lack of tolerance for, much less interest in, examining controversial aspects of the cultures associated with France, the Francophone world in relation to the US.	Students can reflect upon how cultural values can be traced across time and how these values shape perceptions, practices and texts. They can consider issues of colonization, globalization, race and ethnicity in the French and Francophone context, and in relation to the US.	Students appreciate intellectually and esthetically some of the beliefs or values of a culture or cultures associated with the French-speaking world and may have assimilated them; they can discuss moral issues pertaining to these various cultures and their complex, interwoven histories.
c.	Students show little interest or knowledge of contemporary issues associated with French and Francophone cultures.	Students recognize the points of contact between France and Francophone countries in relation to the US. They act with informed awareness of contemporary issues in their historical contexts.	Students can effectively compare the various levels and realms within one or several cultures of France and one or more Francophone countries in relation to the US and their own.

**Possible measurement methods:**

- Course embedded assignment: multiple writing assignments; term papers, midterm and final exams, and in-class oral presentations. Substantive research papers at the 400 level.
- Curricular embedded distribution requirements cover multiple subject matters including the Arts, Culture and Society, France and the Islamic world; France in relation to the EU, the Francophone world and the US.
- Study abroad is strongly recommended for majors.
- Students enrolled in Interdisciplinary programs: International Studies / Comparative Literature and Culture; students involved in service or research in French-speaking countries or with French communities in the Bay Area.

The location of our university in a culturally diverse setting can contribute substantially to this goal. A well established French-speaking community in the Bay area offers numerous enriching cultural and social activities in which students can participate. Such gatherings contribute to a better understanding of the diverse and multicultural identity of the French-speaking world as represented here in the Bay area.

**Who will do the assessment?**

Full time faculty in the French program should meet twice during the Fall 2008, first to discuss how to reconfigure the Major and a second time to approve a new design as well as to make the necessary amendments to this assessment plan.

**How will data be used to improve the program or revise curricula?**

As part of the revisions to the current French major, upper-division courses should reflect the cross-cultural inquiry and multiple subject matters that define the French-speaking world of today.

- To develop an intellectual engagement, introspection and reflective sensibility that will contribute to their life-long learning  
 Defined: To focus systematically on the principles of how a language is structured and impacts cultural identity.

**Measurable Outcomes:**

- a. Reflect upon how the analysis of artistic works within their cultural contexts encourages creative thinking.
- b. Adapt the knowledge and skills they have learned to new experiences and learning opportunities.
- c. Develop an appreciation for and a life-long interest in French-speaking cultures.

	<b>Very Poor Achievement of Outcome</b>	<b>Average Achievement of Outcome</b>	<b>Very Good Achievement of Outcome</b>
a.	Graduates do not pursue careers or lifestyles that utilize or expand any of the analytical skills learned.	Graduates demonstrate how their acquired skills allow them to engage in intellectual discussions and work that is connected to the appreciation of other cultures.	Graduates conduct research and participate in the cultural conversation of ideas within a wide variety of academic and professional fields.
b.	Graduates lose their proficiency in the language and their interest in the French and Francophone world. Intellectual curiosity is not sustained with any enthusiasm or rigor.	Graduates are able to apply language proficiency and knowledge to enhance competency in other disciplines, particularly those that bring each graduate into professional or social contact with native French-speakers.	Graduates obtain advanced degrees as well as teaching positions or jobs that serve the French and Francophone population in the US or abroad.
c.	Graduates show a general disinterest in the cultures of France, Francophone countries or Francophone communities in the US. Students rely on cultural clichés as opposed to individual experience to inform themselves about the world.	Graduates embrace a multicultural global environment, and remain appreciative of and sophisticated about French-speaking cultures throughout their lives.	Graduates become actively involved in educational institutions, NGOs, community-based organizations or local groups to promote cross-cultural understanding between French and Francophone cultures and others.

**Possible measurement methods:**

- Embedded assignments: research papers, reflection papers, journals.
- Number of students who obtain advanced degrees, teaching positions or jobs that serve the French-speaking population in the US or abroad. Number of students who remain involved in service or research in French-speaking communities (within the US) and/or countries. Number of recipients of International grants or internships after graduation.
- Online surveys or questionnaires\*

\* Online surveys or questionnaires would be designed with our exiting students and our alumni in mind, once the new Major configuration is in place, to determine the effectiveness of each goal within the major.

**Who will do the assessment?**

Two faculty members (on a rotating basis) would review the surveys or questionnaires annually and would then write a summary of the results for those in our program, as well as the best possible corrections that should be taken.

**How will data be used to improve the program or revise curricula?**

Surveys or questionnaires should be a valuable assessment tool when reviewing new curricula.

**Time Frame**

June 30, 2008	All Department/Program representatives will have completed initial 4 hour workshop.
August 22, 2008	All Department/Program representatives will have edited/developed program goals and learning outcomes, completed a curriculum map, appropriate rubrics, and written a complete assessment plan.
September 15, 2008	All Department/Program representatives will have completed second workshop.
September 30, 2008	All faculty in each Department/Program will have discussed the assessment plan, determine assessment methods and implement the first year of the plan.
May 15, 2009	All Departments/Programs will have assessed 1/3 of their program outcomes, made a determination as to whether the learning outcomes have been attained, met as a department to discuss the assessment results, and will have developed a plan for improvement in order to meet benchmark standards if necessary.
May 15, 2010	All Departments/Programs will have assessed the second 1/3 of their program outcomes, made a determination as to the attainment of the outcomes and developed a plan for improvement for meeting the desired levels.
May 15, 2011	All Departments/Programs will have assessed the final 1/3 of their program outcomes, made a determination as to the attainment of the outcomes and develop a plan for improvement for meeting the desired level. Report on progress