Expected Outcome 1: Ability to identify and explain cultural contexts

Graduating students will be able to recall cultural events, people, topics, and identify and interpret their relevance for German-speaking societies.

Assessment Method 1: Written samples

Assessment Method Description

Students submit written samples of their work as part of the Capstone requirement. These samples include at least two cultural topics (i.e. current events and issues discussed in the civilization, film, literature or special topics courses), and, in the case of the International Trade students, two business related topics. Faculty evaluate the samples based on rubrics and a scale ranging from 1 to 4 (does not meet expectations, almost meets expectations, meets expectations, and exceeds expectations). There are no standardized ACTFL guidelines for culture as there are for oral and written competency.

The faculty nevertheless values this Student Learning Outcome: a survey of regional U.S.-based German companies conducted by two faculty members as well as a survey of Alumni and Alumnae as part of a departmental program review revealed the importance these constituents placed on a solid understanding of the target culture; recognition of cultural differences, intercultural competence acquired through their coursework similarly benefitted them in operating in the target culture as linguistic competence; of course, culture does not exist in a vacuum but rather is informed by language and vice versa.

The following individual rubrics were used for evaluation, see attached faculty evaluation form (Culture.Evaluation):

- Recall and identification
- Analysis of meaning and context
- Interpretation of relevance
### Findings

The faculty evaluated the samples in respect to cultural content, analysis, and interpretation, while disregarding as far as possible linguistic accuracy. Six students exceeded expectations, five scoring a 4 (including one of the Trade students), and one scoring 3.7. Two students (including the second Trade student) met expectations, scoring a 3.3 overall.

Analysis of the scores for individual rubrics of the faculty evaluation sheet revealed both a strength and a weakness – see spreadsheet attached as word document (Analysis.Culture.Samples).

Average score in rubric:
- Recall and identification: 4
- Analysis of meaning and context: 3.6
- Interpretation of relevance: 3.8

While students demonstrated excellent familiarity with cultural contexts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Exceeds expectations</th>
<th>Meets expectations</th>
<th>Almost Meets expectations</th>
<th>Does not meet expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>C 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 B 1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>C 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 B 1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>C 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 B 1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>C 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 B 1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recall and Identification</th>
<th>Accurate identification of event, person, date, or business fact</th>
<th>Recognizes name but lacks specificity</th>
<th>Recall of name</th>
<th>No recognition or vague recall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis of meaning and context</th>
<th>Accurate description of details and cultural/business context</th>
<th>Description of contexts lacks detail with some incoherence</th>
<th>Simple description, little coherence</th>
<th>Vague description (after interlocutor assisted with recall)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Recall and identification
- **Score**: 4
- **Description**: Accurate identification of event, person, date, or business fact

#### Analysis of meaning and context
- **Score**: 3.6
- **Description**: Accurate description of details and cultural/business context

#### Interpretation of relevance
- **Score**: 3.8
- **Description**: Description of contexts lacks detail with some incoherence
overall, some also lacked specificity when asked to interpret their broader meaning, significance in more detail.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Recall and Identification (event, person, date) (business related issue)</th>
<th>Analysis of meaning and context</th>
<th>Interpretation of relevance</th>
<th>Mean Score and Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (Trade)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 (Trade)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Score</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Students have been required to focus on detailed description of the topic and interpretation of meaning within a broader (historical-cultural) context (e.g. significance of inflation, currency devaluation in the 1920s and its relevance today) both in cultural topics related papers and presentations. Emphasis has also been given to have students to continuously compare and contrast their own culture with salient aspects of the target culture to augment the latter’s critical examination.
General: the civilization course sequence is offered at least every other year, there is continuation of extracurricular cultural activities such as the Fall film series, the biweekly conversation table, and Coffee and Cake meetings during German American Heritage Month in October which enhance student acquisition of customs of the target culture.

**Additional Comments**

Although the faculty was satisfied with the findings, it was decided for the Capstone to include a newspaper article about current events which students will read while being proctored. The text will be accompanied by a few general questions about the text, which the students may use for discussion and analysis of the reading.

The student surveys mentioned above also revealed student interest in a variety of themes and topics in their courses. A common criticism, i.e. weakness was both the limited number of courses as well as the range of topics. The number of upper level courses has been expanded by one course for AY 2013-2014, and Special Topics courses which allow for expanded subject matters or more focused specialized themes in linguistics (dialects, translation) or literature (fin de siècle Vienna etc.) are offered both semesters.

**Assessment Method 2:** Exit interview with undergraduate director

**Assessment Method Description**

Students undergo a 30 to 45 minute long exit interview. The interview includes questions about culture, history and society of German-speaking countries. The questions are attached as a word document (Culture.Questionnaire). Students are asked to identify events, dates, people and comment and interpret their relevance for German-speaking societies today. The responses reveal student competence in the subject matter through recall as well as interpretation of meaning and explanation of relevance for German-speaking societies today. The questions are posted as a word document on the Capstone course site in Canvas but, during the interview, students have to listen carefully to the interlocutor and respond freely without notes.

The following individual rubrics were used for evaluation, resembling the rubrics in assessment method 1 – for the faculty evaluation form (Culture.Evaluation) see attachment under assessment method 1:

- Recall and identification
- Analysis of meaning and context
- Interpretation of relevance

**Findings**

The undergraduate director’s evaluation focused on recall and description as well as explanation of the cultural content raised by the questions, while
disregarding as far as possible linguistic accuracy. The scores echoed the conclusions from the written samples (Assessment Method 1)

Six students exceeded expectations,

five scoring a 4 (including one of the Trade students), and

one scoring 3.7

Two students (including the second Trade student) generally met expectations, scoring a 3 and 2.7 respectively.

Analysis of the scores for individual rubrics of the faculty evaluation form, resembling findings with assessment method 1, revealed a weakness in the analysis component – see spreadsheet attached as word document (Analysis.Culture.Samples)

Average score in rubric:

- Recall and identification 3.8
- Analysis of meaning and context 3.5
- Interpretation of relevance 3.8

While students demonstrated excellent familiarity with cultural contexts overall, some also lacked specificity when asked to interpret their broader meaning, significance in more detail.
CAPSTONE: CULTURAL ASSESSMENT TEST (AY 2012-2013)

1. Wer war Deutschlands Bundeskanzler während der Wiedervereinigung (1989-1990)? Wer ist das gegenwärtige Staatsoberhaupt?
2. Wann wurde Deutschland zum ersten Mal eine vereinte Nation? Unter wem?
4. Nennen Sie die drei großen politischen Parteien in Deutschland.
5. Was sind "Kirchensteuern"? Warum gibt es sie in Deutschland (und nicht z.B. in Amerika)?
8. Welche Rolle spielte Erzherzog Franz Ferdinand in der deutsch-österreichischen Geschichte?
10. Es gibt viele berühmte, deutschsprachige Autoren, die aus anderen deutschsprachigen Gebieten kommen. Nennen Sie drei. Woher kommen sie? Was haben sie geschrieben?
11. Nennen Sie ein paar internationale deutsche Firmen.
12. Vergleichen Sie die Essgewohnheiten in deutschsprachigen Ländern mit denen der USA.
13. Nennen Sie die zehn Nachbarländer Deutschlands.
15. Was ist das Goethe-Institut? Warum wird das Goethe Institut von der Bundesrepublik finanziell unterstützt? Nach wem wurde es benannt?
16. Welche deutschen Feiertage und/oder Feste kennen Sie und wie werden sie gefeiert?
17. Wie viele Weihnachtsfeiertage gibt es in Deutschland und was passiert am Heiligen Abend?
18. Wie wird das Familienleben in Deutschland vom Staat gefördert?
19. Wie heißt das berühmteste, bekannteste (und auch international bedeutendste) Filmfestival in Deutschland? Was wissen Sie darüber?
20. Welche Rolle spielt die Bundesrepublik in der Europäischen Union?

Business Questions:

1. Das Motto der Europäischen Union lautet “In Vielfalt geeint”. Was wird damit gemeint?

2. Was ist der Binnenmarkt der Europäischen Union?

3. Unter welchen Umständen schickt man eine Mängelrüge?

4. Was bestimmt den Preis einer Ware auf dem freien Markt?
5. Erklären Sie den Unterschied zwischen einem Girokonto und einem Sparkonto.


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**Foreign Languages & Literatures**

**STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE**

Please take a moment to respond to the questions below as part of your Capstone course. We appreciate and welcome your comments about and assessment of your experience as a German/Trade major at Auburn. To ensure your anonymity, please return this questionnaire to Ms. Lochlyn Knight, the secretary in the Department of Foreign Languages (6030 Haley Center), and ask her to put this form in the Undergraduate Director’s locked mailbox.

**Language/s Studied: German**

**Major(s):**

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_____

**Graduation date:**

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**Plans after graduation:**

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I. From your perspective, please describe the strengths of the program in the foreign language/s you studied, including subjects and courses that were most beneficial to you.

II. Please describe any weaknesses you have noted in the courses or the program, including areas that could be improved.

III. What courses need to be added in the future, or what subjects need to be emphasized further to benefit students?

IV. Please indicate how the FLL courses you took have contributed to your personal development and/or your professional success.

V. What are some of the most memorable experiences from the education you received in the FLL Department as you worked toward your degree?

VI. Please add any information that may be helpful to the Department as a whole and to the French section in particular as they work to improve their programs.

Thank you.
**How did you use findings for improvement?**
Students have been required to focus on detailed description of the topic and interpretation of meaning within a broader (historical-cultural) context (e.g. significance of inflation, currency devaluation in the 1920s and its relevance today) both in cultural topics related papers and presentations. Emphasis has also been given to have students to continuously compare and contrast their own culture with salient aspects of the target culture to augment the latter's critical examination.

**General:** the civilization course sequence is offered at least every other year, there is continuation of extracurricular cultural activities such as the Fall film series, the biweekly conversation table, and Coffee and Cake meetings during German American Heritage Month in October which enhance student acquisition of customs of the target culture.

**Additional Comments**
The departmental student survey questionnaire students are asked out to fill out not surprisingly revealed that students appreciate and value courses focusing on topics about the target culture(s).

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**Expected Outcome 2: Competence in oral communication**
Graduating students will demonstrate proficiency in oral communication

**Assessment Method 1: Oral samples**

**Assessment Method Description**
Students make voice recordings of both a prepared text and extemporaneous speech. Faculty evaluate the students' samples both for linguistic accuracy (particularly in the prepared text) and level of proficiency (especially in the extemporaneous recording). The rubrics used to determine level of student proficiency follow the guidelines of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. As indicated in last year's assessment, in Fall 2012 German faculty received training to evaluate student performance according to these standardized rubrics which are nationally and internationally recognized by my major corporations and businesses companies, and are also aligned with evaluations of government agencies. These rubrics list detailed descriptions of what students must be able to tell, discuss, interpret, examine, formulate and argue in the target language to demonstrate the respective proficiency level. Complete guidelines are available at: [http://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/public/ACTFLProficiencyGuidelines2012_FINAL.pdf](http://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/public/ACTFLProficiencyGuidelines2012_FINAL.pdf)
The individual guidelines for SPEAKING are attached as pdf file (ACTFL.Speaking)
Based on the ACTFL guidelines, faculty evaluation sheets (attached as Speaking.Evaluation) provided the rubrics: Language/Vocabulary

- **Time frame**
- **Topics/Structure**
- **Pronunciation/Comprehensibility**

including descriptors of what is expected on a scale from 1 to 6 (1 resembling the Intermediate-low proficiency level, 6 advanced-high). This methodological choice is based on the fact that the average foreign language graduate, proficiency-wise, tends to operate on the intermediate-high level. Hence, both the Novice level (goal of a two year curriculum) as well as the Superior (and Distinguished) level were not included on the scale; it should be noted the majority of the population of any target language does not operate on the Superior (nor, of course, the Distinguished) level, but rather and to varying degrees, on the advanced level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCORE Focus</th>
<th>Intermediate-low</th>
<th>Intermediate-mid</th>
<th>Intermediate-high</th>
<th>Advanced-low</th>
<th>Advanced-mid</th>
<th>Advanced-high</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language/Vocabulary</td>
<td>Survival needs (food, making simple purchases)</td>
<td>Express personal meaning; little circumlocution</td>
<td>Daily life and social situations, but limited when leaving the personal realm</td>
<td>Variety of communicative tasks; circumlocution and rephrasing</td>
<td>Large number of communicative tasks; circumlocution/rephrasing</td>
<td>Abundant vocab on personal, inter/national matters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time frame</td>
<td>Present time</td>
<td>Difficulty manipulating time</td>
<td>Narrate and describe in all major time frames most of the time</td>
<td>Narrate and describe in all major time frames; some control of aspect</td>
<td>Full accounts in all major time frames; good control of aspect</td>
<td>Explain in detail and narrate fully and accurately in all time frames</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topics/Structure</td>
<td>Concrete topics; limited number of predictable topics; social situations (self/family/daily activities)</td>
<td>Reactive, but capable of asking variety of questions to obtain information, strings of sentences</td>
<td>Ease and confidence in routine tasks and social situations related to work, school, and areas of competence</td>
<td>Personal topics as well as topics related to employment, current events; and matters of community interest</td>
<td>Variety of topics related to work, school, leisure; and events of current/public relevance.</td>
<td>Variety of topics, structured arguments to support opinion, construction of hypotheses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some topics discussed abstractly but comfortable to discuss concretely.
Findings
6 participants for German (GR) and 2 for International Trade (IT) submitted their recordings. Review of the student samples revealed a spread of overall student proficiency:
1 student was ranked advanced-mid
2 students advanced-low
2 intermediate-high
2 intermediate-mid
1 intermediate-low
Analysis of the individual scores for the rubrics on the faculty evaluation sheet revealed some common strengths and one weakness in particular – see spreadsheet attached as word document (Analysis.Speaking.Samples)
Average score in rubric:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language/Vocabulary</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time frame</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topics/Structure</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronunciation/Comprehensibility</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Since the descriptors for the individual rubrics are interrelated and students should thus score in the general range of the respective proficiency level, the spread of the four dimensions used is seemingly narrow. Nevertheless, use, in particular consistent use of tenses for expression of time frames in narration was found to be a weakness while pronunciation and overall comprehensibility were points of strengths.
The highest performing student operated with ease and near-native like pronunciation both while reading and speaking freely on a chosen topic. This particular student, however, had native background, thus explaining his relative superior performance. The other two students on the advanced level had extensive study abroad experience: while one participated in the departmental 5 week summer program in Vienna, Austria, the other participated both in that program and a semester abroad experience, predominantly in engineering but in German-speaking Zurich, Switzerland. The students on the intermediate-high and -mid proficiency level generally demonstrated expression that is understood by a native speaker, including those unfamiliar dealing with non-natives, but also revealed inconsistent use
of time, i.e. tendency to revert to present tense for narration of the past or events in the future.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>DIMENSIONS SPEAKING – Samples</th>
<th>Mean Score and Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Language/ Vocabulary</td>
<td>Use of Time Frame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (Trade)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 (Trade)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Average Score** 3.3 3 3.3 3.4

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

Starting at the 1020-level, courses started emphasizing review of tenses both as a grammatical structures as well as concrete application in simple retelling of readings in major time frames. From the beginning level students are also required to memorize dialogues to internalize structures in various time frames through repetitive incorporation in their own speech. Similarly, common warm-up activities at the beginning of class, put emphasis on reproduction of personalized information in past tenses. Also, role plays (prepared but extemporaneously presented in forms of dialogues of two or three students) include topics that require more than one time frame (i.e. a historical character talks about his/time in the past, the partner in the dialogue is explaining things present and future). A minimum of three similar role plays were introduced in all courses on or above the intermediate level. In upper level courses, formal presentations and presentational
components have been implemented to reinforce communication beyond the realm of familiar topics – and in present time – and emphasize abstract topics (politics, society, literature) with a focus on working with and incorporating appropriate time frames in order to attain oral proficiency on the advanced level of the ACTFL scale.

General: The German section encourages study abroad to foster and deepen application of all communicative skills. Students are also advised to participate in Stammtisch, the bi-weekly conversation table: all students attending are encouraged to use the target language, regardless of their skill level.

Additional Comments
Assessment of the two degrees (German and German International Trade – the latter with only four students graduating with a Trade degree in the last three academic years – has been combined because of both quantitative and curricular/programmatic reasons:
The curriculum of the German component of the Trade degree is identical to the “straight” German major except for the two courses focusing on German for Business (Business German I and II); however, given the limited number of upper level courses for German majors, almost all of these majors enroll in at least one of the Business courses also; from a curricular point of view this is desirable, since it exposes all students to learn and practice more business- and job-related writing, including composition of resumes and formal letters. The difference in the Capstone course is that for Trade students it requires submission of two business-related oral and written samples as well as five “cultural” questions focusing specifically on business in the exit interview.

Assessment Method 2: Exit interview with undergraduate director

Assessment Method Description
Students undergo a 30 to 45 minute long exit interview. The interview includes
a) questions about culture, history and society of the German-speaking countries; students are asked to identify events, dates, people and comment and interpret their relevance for German-speaking societies today. In the case of the International Trade students the questions also include business related questions. The responses reveal student competence in the subject matter through recall as well as level of linguistic proficiency in communicating their fact-based knowledge. The interview
b) also evaluates students' oral proficiency by tailoring questions that require students to perform tasks that reflect the various proficiency levels and sublevels (from Novice to Advanced and Superior) of the standard ACTFL guidelines (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages).
The rubrics for evaluation are identical to those used in Assessment Method 1:

- Language/Vocabulary
- Time frame
- Topics/Structure
- Pronunciation/Comprehensibility

including descriptors of what is expected on a scale from 1 to 6 (1 resembling the Intermediate-low proficiency level, 6 advanced-high).

**Findings**

6 participants for German (GR) and 2 for International Trade (IT) submitted their recordings. Review of the student samples overall resembled the findings of the samples reviewed:

1 student was ranked advanced-mid
2 students advanced-low
2 intermediate-high
2 intermediate-mid
1 intermediate-low

Analysis of the scores for individual rubrics of the faculty evaluation sheet, however, revealed common strengths and one weakness in particular – see spreadsheet attached as word document (Analysis.Speaking.Interview)

Average score in rubric:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Average Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language/Vocabulary</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time frame</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topics/Structure</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronunciation/Comprehensibility</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Again, the weakness was located in communicating in correct time frames, while comprehensibility and overall pronunciation remained a strength. The advanced-mid student (who has native background) confidently handled both formal and informal exchanges about both concrete topics such as family and university life and topics relating to current events and history as presented by the culture questions of the interview. The 2 advanced low students similarly conversed with ease about personal interests in paragraph-length discourse, but increasingly made grammatical mistakes including signs of inconsistent use of time frames when presented with more challenging, abstract topics about society, such as the Health Care System, or the role of the Churches in the target countries. The 5 students on the intermediate-high and -mid successfully handled conversing about routine tasks in social situations. Responses to more complicated topics as presented by some of the culture questions were limited to singular sentences and in present tense only. Using less connected discourse, interpretation and examination of the topics were thus presented less cohesively; however, all students were able to handle uncomplicated communicative tasks for social situations which do not require operating in different time frames.
How did you use findings for improvement?

Starting at the 1020-level, courses started emphasizing review of tenses both as a grammatical structures as well as concrete application in simple retelling of readings in major time frames. From the beginning level students are also required to memorize dialogues to internalize structures in various time frames through repetitive incorporation in their own speech. Similarly, common warm-up activities at the beginning of class, put emphasis on reproduction of personalized information in past tenses. Also, role plays (prepared but extemporaneously presented in forms of dialogues of two or three students) include topics that require more than one time frame (i.e. a historical character talks about his/time in the past, the partner in the dialogue is explaining things present and future). A minimum of three similar role plays were introduced in all courses on or above the intermediate level. In upper level courses, formal presentations and presentational components have been implemented to reinforce communication beyond the realm of familiar topics – and in present time – and emphasize abstract topics (politics, society, literature) with a focus on working with and
incorporating appropriate time frames in order to attain oral proficiency on the advanced level of the ACTFL scale.

General: The German section encourages study abroad to foster and deepen application of all communicative skills. Students are also advised to participate in Stammtisch, the bi-weekly conversation table: all students attending are encouraged to use the target language, regardless of their skill level.

Additional Comments

Expected outcome 3: Competence in writing
Graduating students demonstrate proficiency in written German

Assessment Method 1: Written samples

Assessment Method Description
Students submit written samples of their work as part of the Capstone requirement. The samples consist of a variety of papers from different upper level course work, total at least five to seven page, and include 2 culture and/or business-related samples. The rubrics used to determine level of student proficiency follow the guidelines of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. These standardized rubrics are nationally and internationally recognized by my major corporations and businesses companies, and are also aligned with evaluations of government agencies. These rubrics list detailed descriptions of what students must be able to interpret, examine, formulate and argue in the target language to demonstrate the respective proficiency level. Complete guidelines are available at: http://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/public/ACTFLProficiencyGuidelines2012_FINAL.pdf

The individual guidelines for SPEAKING are attached as pdf file (ACTFL.Writing)

Based on the ACTFL guidelines, faculty evaluation sheets (attached as Writing.Evaluation) provided the following rubrics for assessment: Vocabulary

Time frame
Function/Structure
Comprehensibility

including descriptors of what is expected on a scale from 1 to 6 (1
resembling the Intermediate-low proficiency level, 6 advanced-high). This methodological choice is based on the fact that the average foreign language graduate, proficiency-wise, tends to operate on the intermediate-high level. Hence, both the Novice level (goal of a two year curriculum) as well as the Superior (and Distinguished) level were not included on the scale. It should be noted the majority of the population of any target language does not operate on the Superior (nor, of course, the Distinguished) level, but rather and to varying degrees, on the advanced level.

Findings
8 participants (6 German and 2 German IT) submitted writing samples. Review and evaluation of the student samples for general grammatical

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCORE</th>
<th>Intermediate-low</th>
<th>Intermediate-mid</th>
<th>Intermediate-high</th>
<th>Advanced-low</th>
<th>Advanced-mid</th>
<th>Advanced-high</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vocabulary</strong></td>
<td>Basic, elementary needs</td>
<td>Basic, personal and common needs</td>
<td>Basic, personal, social (work/school) needs</td>
<td>Meets basic work and academic needs</td>
<td>Meets a range of work/academic needs</td>
<td>Wide general vocabulary for in/formal correspondence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time frame</strong></td>
<td>Present time, contains reference to other time frames</td>
<td>Present time, contains reference to other time frames</td>
<td>Use different time frames, but inconsistent, with appropriate time markers</td>
<td>Describes in major time frames with control of aspect</td>
<td>Describes with detail in all major time frames, good control of aspect</td>
<td>Narrates and describes in major time frames, solid control of aspect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Function, Structure</strong></td>
<td>Statements, questions about familiar material</td>
<td>Control of basic sentence structure, personal sentences loosely strung together</td>
<td>Paragraphs of oral discourse, resembles oral discourse</td>
<td>Composition and simple summaries</td>
<td>Paragraph length and structure</td>
<td>Cohesive, several paragraphs in length</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Simple, conversational type sentences, repetitive</td>
<td>Personal topics, daily routines, common</td>
<td>Descriptions, narrations about school experience</td>
<td>Narrations, correspond to spoken language</td>
<td>Patterns of oral discourse, resembles writing style of first language</td>
<td>Control of frequent target language syntax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Topics tied to personal information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Topics of general interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Significant precision and details in summaries and reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Topics relating to particular interests and special interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(inconsistent) construction of hypotheses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Student ____________________________ WRITING: use Rubrics for Evaluation:
correctness and overall linguistic accuracy revealed differences in student proficiency which were similar to the findings for their oral communicative skills.
2 students advanced-low
3 intermediate-high
2 intermediate-mid
1 intermediate-low
A more detailed analysis of the scores for individual rubrics of the faculty evaluation sheet revealed both a strength and a weakness – see spreadsheet attached as word document (Analysis.Speaking.Samples)
Average score in rubric:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time frame</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Function/Structure</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronunciation/Comprehensibility</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The students on the advanced level composed narratives with accurate usage of the major time frames; their sentences on specific topics were linked into fairly cohesive paragraphs, thus meeting general work or academic writing needs. In contrast, the two students on the intermediate high level (including the student with native background), while meeting general practical writing needs (messages, letters), lacked the interpretive and analytical quality of the linked sentences of the more advanced students. The students’ samples on the intermediate-mid and -low level resembled oral discourse, although the mid-level student demonstrated some control of sentence structure and verb forms. The choice of vocabulary of the student falling into the low category was limited to basic, learned words and structures as well.
How did you use findings for improvement?
The faculty had increased writing modules in the first and second year sequence based on findings of the prior assessment findings; these students are just entering the upper level courses for the majors. More emphasis has now been given to grammar and exercises focusing on grammatical structures in both the first and second year sequence. Students in advanced courses have been required to submit a minimum of 3 two to three page essays on a variety of topics, from personal information and requesting information to formal and informal correspondence (blogs) to objective, analytical narratives of factual nature. For the latter in particular students are provided with ample opportunity for revision. Papers are corrected via codes only to draw students’ attention to specific aspects of grammar and syntax (word order etc.) when revising their papers; providing indirect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>Use of Time Frame</th>
<th>Function/Structure</th>
<th>Comprehensibility</th>
<th>Mean Score and Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (Trade)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.8</td>
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<tr>
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<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Score</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
means of corrections such as codes rather than direct, verbatim instruction forces students to analyze structural problems of their writing and to master these shortcomings themselves while revising. Student papers. The faculty has also incorporated bi-monthly composition of textbook-related short essays and interpretations which require to go beyond the respective text’s plot and use it in a new setting and context while employing and applying the structures of the original (e.g. characters of one text appear in another’s plot and setting).

**Additional Comments**
Students are required to write a proctored essay about a culture or business related current events topic as part of the Capstone course in the next assessment cycle.