Expected Outcome 1: Hispanic Cultural Knowledge  
Graduating MA students will communicate coherently in written Spanish at a minimum level of advanced low, using the standards of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. The ACTFL writing standards are: distinguished; superior; advanced high, mid, and low; intermediate high, mid, and low; and novice high, mid, and low.

Assessment Method 1: Comprehensive Written Examination

Assessment Method Description
Students were evaluated based on their performance on the written comprehensive examinations. There are ten different sections, each related to all genres of Spanish Peninsular Literature (from the Medieval period to the present day), Spanish American Literature (from the Colonial period to the present day), as well as the major areas of Hispanic Linguistics (i.e. History of the Spanish Language, Dialectology, Second Language Acquisition, Syntax, and Phonetics). Of these ten areas, MHS students eliminated four if they earned an A or a B on courses related to the areas. Thus, they were examined on six areas. The exams were administered, as usual, on Tuesday and Thursday of the ninth week of the semester, from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Students had 1 hour and 30 minutes to finish each section of the exam.

Findings
Five MA students took the comprehensive exams. The students were able successfully to comment in an informed and erudite manner on each subject area. As a whole, the MA students fared better on the exams than the MHS students. They failed fewer sections than the MHS students, and successfully approved their failed sections on the retake. The quality of the written expression was not dependent upon the student's native language.

How did you use findings for improvement?
We created a grading rubric for the exam that separates content knowledge from written expression (Both written expression and content knowledge rubrics are attached). For the written communication skills in Spanish, we now can evaluate the exams based on a detailed grading rubric designed following
the American Council for Teaching of Foreign Languages guideline. We will begin showing results of student written expression on comprehensive exams using the new rubric in the 2013 report, so we can better ascertain at what level of writing they are.

Additional Comments

Expected Outcome 2: Hispanic Cultural Knowledge.
Graduating MA students will understand the major literary and cultural movements in the Spanish-speaking world as well as the current trends in Hispanic Linguistics, and be able to analyze them at a minimum advanced low level by ACTFL standards.

Assessment Method 1: Comprehensive Written Examination.

Assessment Method Description
Each MA student was evaluated based on his/her performance on the written comprehensive examinations. There are ten different sections, each related to all genres of Spanish Peninsular Literature (from the Medieval period to the present day), Spanish American Literature (from the Colonial period to the present day), as well as the major areas of Hispanic Linguistics (i.e. History of the Spanish Language, Dialectology, Second Language Acquisition, Syntax, and Phonetics). Of these ten areas, MA students eliminated five if they earned an A or a B on courses related to the areas. Thus, they were examined on five areas. The exams were administered, as usual, on Tuesday and Thursday of the ninth week of the semester, from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Students had 1 hour and 30 minutes to finish each section of the exam.

Findings
Five MA students took the comprehensive exams. The students were able successfully to comment in an informed and erudite manner on each subject area. As a whole, the MA students fared better on the exams than the MHS students. They failed fewer sections and successfully challenged their lackluster sections on the retake.

The quality of the written expression was not dependent upon the student's native language.

How did you use findings for improvement?
We created a content knowledge rubric for the exam (attached). For the written communication skills in Spanish, we now can evaluate the exams
based on a detailed grading rubric designed following the American Council for Teaching of Foreign Languages guideline. Next year we will begin showing results of student written expression on comprehensive exams. This will allow us to assess the level of written expression more accurately.

We also provided two workshops in preparation for the exam --one on test-writing skills and the other on approaching the content. Also faculty members contributed advice for an orientation manual, detailing their philosophy of the exam, primary and secondary source materials, as well as practical study and test-taking tips.

Additional Comments
The structure and efficacy of the exam is still very much in debate amongst our faculty. We are making an effort to better track statistically the outcome of the exam and to marry it better with our graduate curriculum.

Assessment Method 2: Oral Interview and Recording.

Assessment Method Description
Students submit an oral recording of spontaneous speech in Spanish over the subject of their choice. They engage in a sight-reading exercise in which they are asked to perform a cold reading of an unknown text in Spanish and engage in prompted conversation about the subject.

Findings
Each student can speak widely and at length on most of the subject matters.

How did you use findings for improvement?
We are pleased with this outcome and did not find a need to change it.

Additional Comments
None

Assessment Method 3: Thesis Project

Assessment Method Description
Students embark on an original research project related to a topic in Hispanic Linguistics and/or Literature. The majority of primary sources and/or studies will be in Spanish; however, students
can elect whether to write the thesis in either Spanish or English.

**Findings**
Students showed great range in their research topics and in their approach to the subject. All of the theses included either a linguistic or literary theoretical emphasis.

**How did you use the findings for improvement?**
We were pleased with the outcome. We shall continue to strive for this diversity.

**Additional Comments**
None

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**Expected Outcome 3: Spoken Spanish Language Skills.**
Graduating MA students will demonstrate competence in oral communication in Spanish at a minimum level of advanced low, using the standards of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.

**Assessment Method 1:** Oral Interview and Recording.

**Assessment Method Description**
All MA students for the academic year 2012-2013 submitted an oral recording of spontaneous speech in Spanish over the subject of their choice, approximately five minutes long. They engaged in a sight-reading exercise in which they are asked to perform a cold reading of an unknown text in Spanish and engage in prompted conversation about the subject. A follow up to this exercise at the end of the program is not required.

**Findings**
All of the students can speak widely and at length on topics related to the Hispanic world. The depth of student responses was not necessarily in correlation to their level of contact with the Spanish language and the Hispanic community. However, since we realize that these results are not actionable, we are working on a rubric to evaluate the 2013 results. This will allow us to assess the level of oral expression more accurately.

**How did you use findings for improvement?**
For the most part, we are pleased with this outcome, but we need to measure
results with a rubric.

**Additional Comments**
We did now include in our thesis oral defense guidelines a recommendation that it takes place both in English and in Spanish so as to prepare MA students for high-level academic discourse both in the target language (Spanish) and in English (a native language for the majority of our graduate students but a non-native tongue for many and one they must be ready to encounter in scholarly circles.)

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**Expected Outcome 4: Independent Investigation.**
Graduating M.A. students in Spanish will engage in a substantial and original research project related to Hispanic Linguistics & Literature, and by the end they will show a minimum satisfactory level of achievement of advanced low according to ACTFL standards.

**Assessment Method 1: Thesis Project.**
**Assessment Method Description**
MA students embark on an original research project related to a topic on Hispanic linguistics and/or literature. The majority of primary sources and/or studies are in Spanish. However, students may elect to write the thesis in either Spanish or English.

**Findings**
Five students successfully defended an original thesis project: two in Hispanic Linguistics, two in Spanish Peninsular Literature, and one in Spanish American Literature. Three out of the four successful MA students required additional time to complete their project, whereas only two were able to finish in a timely manner. We are working on a rubric to measure the quality of the Master's thesis, and it will be ready in time for the 2013 report.

**How did you use findings for improvement?**
We streamlined and formalized the thesis-writing procedures so as to increase awareness on behalf of thesis director, committee members
and students of the responsibilities of each party, guidelines for each thesis component and the goal dates for completion. Additionally, we have changed our advising so that MA students will initiate their research at an earlier stage in their curriculum. Also, we instituted two new thesis-related policies: 1) A thesis committee must consist of at least one tenured faculty member; 2) Any student enrolled in thesis hours must demonstrate at the end of the semester substantial evidence of his/her progress toward the thesis completion. For students in the initial stages, this can be a 10-15 page written and oral proposal defense. For students further along in the process, it ideally would consist of a completed thesis, although at least a completed chapter could suffice.

Additional Comments
We will also implement a thesis evaluation form to be completed by thesis directors, committee members, and students as a helpful assessment tool. Also, we provide sample thesis calendars for incoming students and a step-by-step guide from start to finish for MA students. All thesis students and directors must create at the start of the semester a syllabus outlining the student's thesis goals for that term and a timeline for completion; this will be submitted to the Graduate Program Director and the Department Chair.

Expected Outcome 5: Written Spanish Language Skills.
Graduating MA students will communicate coherently in written Spanish at a minimum level of advanced low, using the standards of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. The ACTFL writing standards are: distinguished; superior; advanced high, mid, and low; intermediate high, mid, and low; and novice high, mid, and low.

Assessment Method 1: Comprehensive Written Examination.
Assessment Method Description
Students were evaluated based on their performance on the written comprehensive examinations. There are ten different sections, each related to all genres of Spanish Peninsular Literature (from the Medieval period to the present day), Spanish American Literature (from the Colonial period to the present day), as well as the major areas of Hispanic Linguistics (i.e. History of the Spanish Language, Dialectology, Second Language Acquisition, Syntax, and Phonetics). Of these ten areas, MHS students eliminated four if they earned an A or a B on courses related to the areas. Thus, they were examined on six areas. The exams were
administered, as usual, on Tuesday and Thursday of the ninth week of the semester, from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Students had 1 hour and 30 minutes to finish each section of the exam.

Findings
Five MA students took the comprehensive exams. The students were able successfully to comment in an informed and erudite manner on each subject area. As a whole, the MA students fared better on the exams than the MHS students. They failed fewer sections than the MHS students, and successfully approved their failed sections on the retake. The quality of the written expression was not dependent upon the student's native language.
**How did you use findings for improvement?**

We created a grading rubric for the exam that separates content knowledge from written expression (Both written expression and content knowledge rubrics are attached). For the written communication skills in Spanish, we now can evaluate the exams based on a detailed grading rubric designed following the American Council for Teaching of Foreign Languages guideline. We will begin showing results of student written expression on comprehensive exams using the new rubric in the 2013 report, so we can better ascertain at what level of writing they are.

**Additional Comments**

For assessment purposes, we ask the students to submit a research paper from one of their classes. This allows for comparison between spontaneous writing and a more careful, student controlled writing situation in which the author would have access to useful resources such as a dictionary or thesaurus and could also more deliberately review grammar and structure. Overall, we are pleased with the MHS students' excellence in written communication.

In addition, we developed a form to demonstrate how well students do in their final papers in all of their classes (attached). Next year we will start using the form for all final papers in all graduate courses. This will allow us to assess the level of written expression more accurately.
RUBRIC FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF GRADUATE STUDENT WRITING

To be completed for Graduating Seniors during their last semester.

Student Name: ________________________________

MA or MHS Program: ________________________________

The essay is from the course: ________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Not Proficient (69% and below)</th>
<th>Proficient (70-89%)</th>
<th>Highly Proficient (90-100%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use of MLA style</td>
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<td>Vocabulary (uses a wide variety of words appropriately, and avoids repetition)</td>
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<td>Grammar</td>
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<td>Presents thesis clearly</td>
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<td>Cites pertinent literary/linguistic criticism on the subject</td>
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<td>Organizes the essay into appropriate supporting points and avoids straying off-topic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conclusion is based on the argument and is of sufficient scope to be pertinent to the field of study</td>
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