

## Departmental Assessment Meeting: Report, French 2016-17

**\*I, Cathy Jellenik, French Coordinator, came to Hendrix in 2012, so the changes described below began that year.**

### Summary of past decisions

Please summarize up to three departmental changes made since the last HLC visit (08-09) the impetus for those changes and any changes to information gathering about student development.

- **Hired a part-time instructor in 2012; converted to full-time in 2015**

**Impetus:** Enrollment in French classes increased to its highest point in 10 years in 2013-14, and enrollment in the non-required courses in the French program now averages 300% of what it was during the AY 2011-2012. Although the AY 2014-2015 saw a dip in enrollment, as it did in all of the languages, the numbers were still higher than what they were in 2011. Since 2011, the average number of students enrolled in intermediate level French is 32.7 and is 24.3 in upper level French; this reflects a 470% growth in intermediate enrollment and 243% growth in three- and four-hundred level courses.

**Information Gathering about Student Development:** Mme. Cottrant-Estell does evaluations in her courses, and according to those, student development has improved due to the presence of a second faculty member on campus.

- **Created a study-abroad program in Tours, France**

**Impetus:** the importance of an immersion experience for the learning of any foreign language, student demand, and the need to offer students with limited openings in their schedules to earn two French credits over the summer.

**Information Gathering about Student Development:** I do an exit-interview with each student who participates in this program, and the student development I thereby witness is astounding. There is quite simply no comparison to an immersion experience in terms of fluency in a foreign language.

- **Rewrote the French Curriculum:**

New Courses:

215: Intermediate French Conversation and Composition II (expanded the grammar courses from 3 to 4)

260/460: French Existentialism (taught in English, in order to offer non-French-speaking students access to French philosophy)

261: French Literature in Translation (in order to offer non-French-speaking students access to the literature)

310: French Cinema and Advanced French Composition

340: French Civilization I

350: French Civilization II

360: Francophone Fiction

401: Small Worlds: French Literary Minimalism

## 460.02: Foreign-Language Pedagogy

**Impetus:** The need to diversify and modernize the curriculum (to include Francophone literature from Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean, and Canada, 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century literature, Civilization courses, a film course, and a foreign-language pedagogy course).

In addition, I re-structured the French major and minor by adding a second year of grammar to the requirement. I also rewrote the Senior Capstone as a class instead of an exam, one component of which includes a presentation at a conference.

**Information Gathering about Student Development:** I have evolved my courses to be more student-centered than in the past; I now include fewer exams and more class presentations, and I have also learned to include writing journals in order to check development weekly.

### Looking forward

Please summarize your department's focus for student development and your evaluation methods.

I would like to create a few more courses: one to study Muslim Literature of French Expression, and one called "Fast-French," in order for high-achieving students to study two semesters of French in a single semester. That would open up the possibility for more students to major and minor in French.

As for evaluation, I am learning to use technology more in evaluating our students. For example, I will attempt to incorporate blogs into my courses next year and use a site called Padlet more often. Finally, I would like for Capstone student to present their research to the campus, and receive evaluative feedback thereon. Next year I will also include an oral defense as part of the Capstone final exam.

### Achieving departmental goals for students

Please explain how your departmental curriculum achieves your student learning goals, being sure to include the Capstone. Feel free to attach a curricular map or other supporting documents. Summarize the ways your department provides guidance in the effective use of research and information resources.

Our goals for students of French at Hendrix who complete the **first-year sequence** include the achievement of beginner's proficiency in speaking, reading, writing, and understanding spoken French. Students at this level also acquire a basic knowledge of French and Francophone culture. We achieve those goals by way of our FREN 110 and FREN 120 courses which include daily exercise in the four skills mentioned. In order to supplement students' access to French and Francophone culture, we run French film series the first-Friday of every month and maintain an active French club.

Our goals for French **minors** include the achievement of intermediate proficiency in speaking, reading, writing, and understanding spoken French. Students at this level also acquire an expanded knowledge of French and Francophone culture, and an ability to analyze texts--both written and visual, as well as other forms of media (the plastic arts, music, etc). Additionally, French minors are encouraged to examine how cultural differences help determine political, economic and social institutions. We achieve those goals by way of a diverse curriculum which includes civilization, literature, film, and philosophy courses. We also encourage all minors to spend at least a summer in France, if not a whole semester or year.

Our goals for French **majors** at Hendrix include the achievement of advanced proficiency in speaking, reading, writing, and understanding spoken French. A host of curricular and co-curricular opportunities enable French majors to achieve high levels of linguistic and cultural competency--opportunities such as inhabiting the French house, attending the French table, viewing French and Francophone films on

campus, teaching French to youngsters at local elementary schools, studying abroad in a French or Francophone country, and more. After achieving linguistic proficiency, French majors pursue study of French and Francophone cultures and literature. French majors also take a French Capstone and Advanced Research course. In that class, after a library-orientation, students experience a graduate-school style course. They are assigned copious readings for our weekly meetings; they must conduct and present independent research, and they take a written Capstone exam which covers all of their French studies at Hendrix.

**Your department's role in achieving the college's shared goals for students**

Please explain how your departmental learning goals contribute to the Vision for Student Learning Goals. Feel free to attach a map or other supporting documents.

In French, students further many of the college's shared goals for them. By way of a diverse offering of courses, students access a breadth of knowledge that starts with the creation of France as a country and moves forward to include literature published in 2012. Over the course of their studies in French, students acquaint themselves with the literature and culture of a diverse set of people: Asians, Africans, Caribbeans, Canadians, and French. Throughout each of our courses, we encourage students to make connections between what they know about their native culture and the cultures of others in a bid for a more empathic, just world.