**LA Capacity Assessment Languages Department AY 2021-2022**

The Languages Department held a meeting on May 13th, 2022, to discuss assessment of the Language Capacity learning goal #3: The Ability to **Use** the Language.

**Attendance** at the meeting:
Cathy Jellenik
Gabby Vidal-Torreira
Severine Cottrant-Estell
Cori French
Lilian Contreras-Silva
Wenjia Liu
José Vilahomat
Irmina Fabricio
Stan Rauh
Rebecca Resinski

The meeting entailed a discussion of our assessment data and plans to improve student learning.

**Summary of Direct Assessment Data: Ability to Use the Language**: assessed via tests, quizzes, homework assignments, and/or presentations in all languages.

According to our direct assessment data, our department was effective in fostering student ability to "Use" the language:

51.5% of students demonstrated a **sophisticated** ability to use the language;
28% of students demonstrated an **average** ability to use the language;
15% of students demonstrated a **below-average** ability to use the language;
5 % of students demonstrated **little to no ability** to use the language.

| | | C | D | E | F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Students will achieve the degree of competence in a language other than English necessary to : | Analyze the language. | Demonstrates a sophisticated ability to analyze the language. | Demonstrates an averzge ability to analyze the language. | Demonstrates below-average ability to analyze the language. | Demonstrates little to no ability to analyze the language. |
| | Understand the language. | Demonstrates a sophisticated ability to understand the language. | Demonstrates an averzge ability to understand the language. | Demonstrates below-average ability to understand the language. | Demonstrates little to no ability to understand the language. |
| | Use the language. | Demonstrates a sophisticated ability to use the language. | Demonstrates an average ability to use the language. | Demonstrates below-average ability to use the language. | Demonstrates little to no ability to use the language. |
| Chinese | | 6 (Chinese) | 5 (Chinese) | 1 (Chinese) | |
| Greek | | 4 (Greek) | 2 (Greek) | 3 (Greek) | |
| French | | 22 (French) | 8 (French) | 5 (French) | 2 (French) |
| Spanish | | 62 (Spanish) | 33 (Spanish) | 17 (Spanish) | 7 (Spanish) |
| Latin | | 3 (Latin) | 5 (Latin) | 3 (Latin) | |
| Totals/percentages | | 97/188 = 51.5% | 53/188 = 28% | 29/188 = 15% | 9/188 = 5% |
| | Apply the language skills to encounter cultures. | Demonstrates a sophisticated to apply the language to encounter cultures. | Demonstrates an average ability to apply the language to encounter cultures. | Demonstrates below-average ability to apply the language to encounter cultures. | Demonstrates little to no ability to apply the language to encounter cultures. |

**Proposed Changes to Improve Student Learning**
Faculty were largely pleased with student learning this year; it was a marked improvement on last year's Covid-affected performance. We did make the following observations and plans to improve, nevertheless:
**Chinese**: it has been difficult to recruit students to Chinese due to the political atmosphere. However, whereas the numbers in Chinese were diminished in comparison to previous years, student performance was increased.
**Classics**:
      **Greek**: Faculty observed some high-achieving students in Greek, however more students "needed

improvement" than in a normal (pre-Covid) year. The first-years who took Greek had a hard time; clearly COVID had set back their student skills.  Some struggled; they succeeded, but it was HARD. In response to student needs, Dr. Resinski changed assignments mid-year; that improved student performance. Dr. Resinski nevertheless observed more students in the C group than usual.  But they were not in the D group!

       For the next iteration of **Greek**: Dr. Resinski plans to emphasize pronunciation early in the semester. Because the appearance of Greek and the sound of Greek are so different, students who tried to rely on the appearance of Greek on a page did not do as well. Dr. Resinski will thus encourage students to pronounce Greek words.

       As regards the 2020 assessment that declared that Greek faculty were going to choose a new textbook: Drs. Resinski and Rauh alternate between teaching 2 dialects of Ancient Greek:  Koine and Attic.  The 2020 assessment was about the Attic dialect textbook that Dr. Rauh had used. Dr. Resinski used a different one than Dr. Rauh when she teaches Attic.  Dr. Resinski taught Koine this year and used the excellent Koine text she has used in the past.

       **Latin**: student performance largely resembled last year's performance (weaker than the previous year)—this seemed to stem from a lack of basic memorization skills.  Dr. Rauh plans to address the memorization problem by putting the students through spoken drills.

**French**: French faculty were pleased with both student performance and the results of the direct assessment. Where French faculty found shortfalls in student performance concerns student confidence during oral presentations and exams: many students appeared overly stressed during those exercises.  Faculty will therefore consider a scaffolded approach to presentations and oral exams, allowing students to do one presentation remotely, one via a video, and then finally doing the oral exam or presentation in person.

**Spanish:** Spanish faculty were pleased with both student performance and the results of the direct assessment. After having changed the textbook in 2020-2021, Spanish faculty felt better equipped to address Spanish reading skills, and it has proved effective.  However, Spanish faculty observed similar anxiety with respect to oral performance and participation amongst students and will consider a similar approach as in French.

**Analysis and Summary of Indirect Assessment Data: Ability to Use the Language**: Assessed via student surveys (French/Latin), student interviews (Chinese/Latin), a reflective assignment (Greek), and curricular analysis and evaluation of a testing component (Spanish).  Spanish had planned to use the student feedback forms for Indirect Assessment data, but due to reasons described below, that was not possible this year.

*While the assessment committee's report from April 2022 had suggested that the department use the questions on the Student Feedback Forms for indirect assessment, Language Faculty were unable to do so for three reasons. First, we did not have access to the student feedback forms prior to our departmental assessment meeting on May 13th. Secondly, the language on the student feedback forms did not match the language on our LA Capacity assessment rubric. Thirdly, the language on the feedback form did not assess this year's learning goal: "The Ability to Use the language" (the feedback form assessed last year's learning goal: "The ability to understand the language"). We plan to address this issue for Assessment Cycle 2023 by contacting Nora Simmons and David Sutherland to request an exact replication of LA Capacity assessment language on the Student Feedback forms 2023 and to make everyone aware of the LA Capacity Cycle of Assessment.

55% of students surveyed **"strongly agree"** that they "demonstrate a sophisticated ability to use the language";
27% of students surveyed **"agree"** that they "demonstrate an average ability to use the language";
20% of students surveyed **"somewhat agree"** that they "demonstrate a below-average ability to use the language";
3% of students surveyed **"neither agree nor disagree."**

| | LA Learning Goals | Strongly Agree | Agree | Somewhat Agree | Neither agree nor disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **6** | | | | | |
| **7** Students will achieve the degree of competence in a language other than English necessary to : | *Analyze the language. | Demonstrates a sophisticated ability to analyze the language. | Demonstrates an average ability to analyze the language. | Demonstrates below-average ability to analyze the language. | Demonstrates little to no ability to analyze the language. |
| **8** | **Understand the language. | Demonstrates a sophisticated ability to understand the language. | Demonstrates an average ability to understand the language. | Demonstrates below-average ability to understand the language. | Demonstrates little to no ability to understand the language. |
| **9** | ***Use the language | Demonstrates a sophisticated ability to use the language. | Demonstrates an average ability to use the language. | Demonstrates below-average ability to use the language. | Demonstrates little to no ability to use the language. |
| **10** Chinese | | 5 | 6 | 1 | |
| **11** French | | 18 | 10 | 1 | |
| **12** Greek | | 4 | 2 | 3 | |
| **13** Latin | | 2 | 6 | 3 | |
| **14** Spanish | | 75 | 27 | 20 | 6 |
| **15** Totals/percentages | | 104/189 = 55% | 51/189 = 27% | 28/189 = 15% | 6/189 = 3% |
| **16** | ****Apply the language skills to encounter cultures. | Demonstrates a sophisticated to apply the language to encounter cultures. | Demonstrates an average ability to apply the language to encounter cultures. | Demonstrates below-average ability to apply the language to encounter cultures. | Demonstrates little to no ability to apply the language to encounter cultures. |
| Descriptive Evidence of Performance: | **Chinese:** student interview | **French:** Student survey | **Greek:** Reflective assignment (the college's student feedback forms not available by time of | **Latin:** Student survey and interview | **Spanish:** curricular analysis and evaluation of testing |

Sheet1 | Sheet2 | Sheet3 | +

## Classics:
**Chinese** : When discussing student confidence, Dr. Liu noted that she warns students that she will call on them throughout the semester; they are therefore prepared and encouraged to participate. Dr. Liu urges students to grow comfortable with making mistakes, stressing that the classroom is a safe space for that to occur.

### Classics
**Greek:** Dr. Resinski used a reflective assignment as her assessment instrument; this tool posed questions to solicit how the students felt about their abilities in Greek and what activities helped foster their learning. Dr. Resinski saw similar results for the indirect assessment as for the direct assessment.

**Latin** : Indirect assessment in Latin was obtained via a quick survey and obtained a similar response rate as for the direct assessment. Latin faculty will consider a change to the questionnaire to make it similar to the reflective assignment deployed in Greek.

**French**: When queried regarding their confidence in French, students described themselves as confident as pertains to writing but lacking in confidence as pertains to oral work. Oral participation was low this year. Again, many students self-identified as overly stressed during oral exercises. French faculty will therefore consider a scaffolded approach to presentations and oral exams, allowing students to do one presentation remotely, one via a video, and then finally doing the oral exam or presentation in person.

**Spanish**: Spanish faculty also observed low confidence in the oral components. Dr. Vidal-Torreira calls on students, but only on material they had prepared. She also dedicates 5 minutes before or after class to discussing difficult topics in the form of 5-minute grammar blasts. This has proven effective and seems to decrease student anxiety. Dr. Vilahomat asks a random student to give him a number, and he asks the student chosen by his peer, based on a previous count of the students in the classroom, each of whom has an assigned number. This activity is a fun game that relieves tension while also forcing them to be prepared.

## Proposed changes across all languages to foster student confidence:

### Audio Recordings
Several faculty make good use of audio recordings (without video). Faculty described how having students do recordings now that it's so easy really builds confidence. Apparently, students experience a lot of pride out of making recordings. While faculty missed doing the one-on-one work, the in-person modality made students more nervous. Recordings served as a middle step while also adding another component to their preparation for post-Hendrix. This component will be considered as a possible modality next year as well.

### Student Survey or in-class assignment mid-semester:
Dr. Resinski shared the reflective component for her Greek classes with her fellow faculty members wherein she had posed questions such as: "How do you assess your own progress? How do you feel about your ability to… Which activity / activities did we do that they feel like got them on the road to this learning goal?" All Languages faculty will consider something similar.