

UNIT PLAN FOR ASSESSING AND IMPROVING STUDENT LEARNING IN DEGREE PROGRAMS

DEPARTMENT OF SLAVIC LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES,
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS (URBANA-CHAMPAIGN)

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SECTION 1: PAST ASSESSMENT RESULTS.

Unfortunately, the first "Assessment Plan" developed by Slavic Langs. and Lits. (dated 3/30/99, credited to Profs. Soffer, Friedberg, Tempest, and Ludwig) seems never to have been implemented. All the credited authors shortly after 1999 either retired, left the U of IL, or moved to another dept. or specialty within the U of IL. Totally new people joined the faculty shortly after 1999, assuming the teaching and assessment duties of those who left, and seemingly the 1999 Plan just "fell through the cracks."

SECTION 2: REVISED ASSESSMENT PLAN.

SUB-SECTION 2(A): PROCESS.

In the case of Slavic Langs. and Lits., the process to develop the following Plan was very simple. Appointed by dept. head Prof Harriet Murav, Prof Steven P Hill, assisted by Prof. Valeria Sobol, went back, found and examined the "un-implemented" 1999 Plan, and realized it was an impressive, serious, careful, very detailed document, into which much time and effort had been put. Hence the 1999 Plan is taken as the basis for this 2008 Plan. Changes were made where necessary (e.g., references to courses revised after 1999), but essentially what follows is the 1999 Plan, which may now have a chance to be implemented, deservedly albeit belatedly.

SUB-SECTION 2(B): STUDENT OUTCOMES.

SUB-DIVISION 1: LANGUAGE COURSES

The Department's undergraduate language courses are meant to provide students with a command of the languages taught --

1. For students taking the Russian 1st year (101-102) sequence:

- read and write Russian letters and words and sentences

- give and respond with simple greetings
- introduce yourself and make introductions to others
- discuss activities in which you regularly participate
- discuss professions and academic topics, including subjects and languages studied
- ask for and give simple directions
- describe your living accommodations and hometown
- purchase needed materials
- describe personal appearances and possessions
- express likes and dislikes
- use numbers from 1-99
- use the past and future tenses
- use time expressions
- express motion
- use days of the week and months of the year
- go shopping
- agree and disagree
- make comparisons

2. For students taking the Russian 2d year (201-202) sequence:

- discuss holiday plans, including making toasts
- more exact time expressions
- tell the temperature and discuss the weather
- survive a trip to the doctor's

- Russian food and traditions
- the arts in Russia
- Russian proverbs
- read several short stories and poems watch and understand two detective movies be able to write short essays about yourself be able to write brief creative works be able to guess and hypothesize in writing and in speech

Students completing the Russian 101-202 sequences are expected to test at the ACTFL Intermediate level.

3. For students taking Russian Language courses at the 3d year (300-level):

The Department offers Russian 301-302, which is Russian language at the 3d-year level, involving advanced grammar, composition, and conversation. These courses are taught in Russian and use authentic Russian materials. At the end of the 300-language series, students will have an increased knowledge of Russian grammar, the ability to read advanced authentic Russian texts, the ability to converse on more complicated topics (with the added ACTFL advanced level abilities to describe, narrate, and compare), and to write essays demonstrating these same advanced-level abilities.

Students completing the Russian 300-level language courses are expected to test at the ACTFL Intermediate-High level, although some students who have spent time in Russia will test at the Advanced level.

4. For students taking Russian 401-402 (4th year):

Students are expected to increase their knowledge of and ability to work with authentic Russian audio and written texts on the ACTFL advanced level from that gained in the 300-level courses.

Students completing Russian 401-402 are expected to test at the ACTFL Advanced level.

5. For students taking the Czech 2-year, Polish 2-year, the Serbian/Croatian 2-year, and the Ukrainian 2-year sequences:

The goals for each level are similar to those for Russian 2-year (101-202) sequences cited above; the only differences appear in the order in which

topics are presented.

SUB-DIVISION 2: LINGUISTICS COURSES.

Undergraduate students taking those of our linguistics courses that are designed for both undergraduate and graduate students, such as Russ 408 (Russ Pronunciation and Phonetics) are expected to add to their level of language competence in the specific sectors indicated by the course titles.

Graduate students taking our linguistics courses, in addition to the undergraduate goals stated above, are expected to have the ability to teach and conduct research in these areas. Those linguistics courses numbered 500 and above are open only to graduate students.

SUB-DIVISION 3: LITERATURE COURSES.

The Russian Literature courses at the 100-400 level are meant to provide undergraduate students with:

- a knowledge of the works in the canon of Russian literature;
- an understanding of the special role that Russian writers and poets have historically played in Russian society and history;
- a command of analytical techniques and approaches relevant for the study of Russian prose and poetry.

In addition to the goals cited above for undergraduate students, graduate students taking our literature courses are expected to have the ability to teach and conduct research in these areas. Those literature courses numbered 500 and above are open only to graduate students.

SUB-SECTION 2(C): MEASURES AND METHODS USED TO MEASURE OUTCOMES.

The assessment of the performance of undergraduate students in the courses they take is assessed according to the following criterion: knowledge of material; performance on in-class tests and quizzes; performance on mid-term and final examinations; term papers (these are usually assigned in third- and fourth-year undergraduate courses, as well as in graduate courses and seminars).

The assessment of the performance of graduate students in the courses

they take is carried out according to the above criteria. In addition:

Students working towards the degree of M. A., in addition to eight hours of coursework as described in the Department's Handbook, must pass a written and oral examination on the material they have studied.

Students working towards the degree of Ph.D., in addition to sixteen hours of coursework as described in the Department's Handbook, must complete a dissertation and defend it before an examination committee.

SECTION 3: PLANS FOR USING RESULTS.

SUB-SECTION 3(A): PLANS.

The results of the assessment of each student are made available to the Undergraduate Adviser, the Graduate Adviser, and/or the Language Program Coordinator, as appropriate, and to the faculty as a whole, as deemed necessary by the Head for funding considerations. Each, appropriate to his/her area of expertise, meets with each student on a one-on-one basis to discuss strengths and weaknesses, to develop a continued program of study, to prepare for career opportunities, and to find appropriate job opportunities upon graduation.

SUB-SECTION 3(B): TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION.

Barring unforeseen difficulties, personnel changes, and the like, it is hoped that the above Plan may begin to be implemented by 2009 (spring or, at the latest, autumn).

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