

**Annual Key Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements  
Department of Modern Languages and Literatures/A&S**

**Undergraduate BA Program in French and French/Secondary Education  
AY 2010-11**

**Key Assessment Findings**

*Senior Assessment*

Three candidates completed the senior assessment requirements during the AY 2010-11 (Table 1, 2, 3). In the fall, they took the senior seminar the highlight of which was the writing of the senior thesis (Table 2), and in the spring they completed the assessment portion, consisting of a written examination in two parts (Table 1), and the oral defense of the thesis (Table 3). All three students were evaluated according to three sets of rubrics, which include the written comprehensive exam, the senior thesis, and the oral defense of the senior thesis. One student consistently exceeded expectations. Students generally met expectations in the first two assessments. In the third, one student either met or exceeded expectations. The other student met most expectations but fell below expectations in a couple of cases.

**Table 1: Written Comprehensive Exam Results (AY 2010-11)**

Trait	Level						Mean	SD	Total N
	Exceeding Expectations (3pts)		Meeting Expectations (2pts)		Below Expectations (1pt)				
	N	%	N	%	N	%			
<b>1) Language use</b>	0	0%	3	100%	0	0%	2.00	0.00	3
<b>2) Vocabulary</b>	1	33%	2	67%	0	0%	2.33	0.58	3
<b>3) Interp. Commun.: reading</b>	1	33%	2	67%	0	0%	2.33	0.58	3
<b>4) Present. Commun.:writing</b>	1	33%	2	67%	0	0%	2.33	0.58	3
<b>5) Literary &amp; Cult. Content (N/A)</b>	0	0%	3	100%	0	0%	2.00	0.00	3
<b>6) Literary &amp; Cult. Analysis</b>	0	0%	3	100%	0	0%	2.00	0.00	3
<b>7) Translation</b>	0	0%	3	100%	0	0%	2.00	0.00	3

**Table 2: Senior Thesis Results (AY 2010-11)**

Trait	Level						Mean	SD	Total N
	Exceeding Expectations (3pts)		Meeting Expectations (2pts)		Below Expectations (1pt)				
	N	%	N	%	N	%			
<b>1) Topic</b>	1	33%	1	33%	1	33%	2.50	0.00	3
<b>2) Content</b>	0	0%	2	67%	1	33%	*	*	3
<b>3) Treatment of culture</b>	1	33%	2	67%	0	0%	2.33	0.58	3
<b>4) Sources</b>	1	33%	2	67%	0	0%	2.33	0.58	3
<b>5) Organization</b>	1	33%	2	67%	0	0%	2.33	0.58	3
<b>6) Language use</b>	1	33%	0	0%	2	67%	1.50*	0.00*	3
<b>7) Vocabulary</b>	1	33%	2	67%	0	0%	2.33	0.58	3

**Table 3: Oral Defense of Senior Thesis Results (AY 2010-11)**

Trait	Level						Mean	SD	Total N
	Exceeding Expectations (3pts)		Meeting Expectations (2pts)		Below Expectations (1pt)				
	N	%	N	%	N	%			
<b>1) Content of thesis summary</b>	0	0%	3	100%	0	0%	2.00	0.00	3
<b>2) Organization</b>	0	0%	1	33%	2	67%	2.50*	0.00*	3
<b>3) Non-verbal effectiveness</b>	1	33%	2	67%	0	0%	2.33	0.58	3
<b>4) Pronunciation</b>	2	67%	1	33%	0	0%	2.67	0.58	3
<b>5) Comprehension of questions</b>	2	67%	1	33%	0	0%	2.67	0.58	3
<b>6) Response to questions</b>	1	33%	1	33%	1	33%	2.00*	0.00*	3
<b>7) Reflectiveness</b>	1	33%	1	33%	1	33%	2.00*	0.00*	3

*Summary and Curricular Improvements*

In the written examinations, all three met expectations, with one exceeding them in three areas. These fairly consistent results reflect the fact that all three students had received the same rigorous in-class training for these exams.

The results for the senior thesis were quite variable: one student exceeded expectations in six of the seven areas, another student met expectations in all but one area, and the third student fell below expectations in all but one area. The student who performed well on this exercise chose a topic about which she was passionate, and this fervor caused her to excel in nearly every area of the writing. The other two students had great difficulty settling on a topic and, predictably, on following through. The French faculty believes that in the future, it must insist that students choose a topic in the spring semester of their junior year so that they will not waste the first few precious weeks of the following fall semester trying to decide what they want to write about. In past years, the students' proposals have been submitted to the entire French faculty for their comments and approval. Because the two students delayed so long in deciding on a topic, this crucial intermediary step was not followed.

For the oral defense, the same student who had excelled in writing her thesis excelled in four out of the seven areas in which she was evaluated. Her confidence level was high, in part because she had spent the previous year studying in France. A second student, who is a heritage student, did well, predictably, in the areas of pronunciation and comprehension of questions. The weakest student's performance fell below expectations in three areas, possibly because she was also doing her student teaching during that semester and was experiencing a higher level of stress than the other two. In past years, we have asked the seniors to present their topics to the French Club in January or February—a kind of dry run that has given them experience and confidence. Although we had intended to follow this practice in spring 2011, we were not able to find a convenient date. We will make sure that this year's senior French major will present her topic to the French Club.