

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

**Undergraduate BA Program in German
AY 2011-12**

Key Assessment Findings

Senior Assessment and Discussion

One student graduated with a major in German in May 2012. She successfully passed her comprehensive exams, both the written and oral component. The student's written and spoken language proficiency was very high and exceeded expectations. She completed a very good senior thesis that met expectations. In order to preserve confidentiality, data is not cited or analyzed in detail in this report.

	Fail		Pass		TOTAL
	#	%	#	%	
Major: German	0	0%	1	100%	1
Major: German/Secondary Education	0	0%	0	0%	0
TOTAL	0	0%	1	100%	1

During AY 2011/2012, the German program for the first time administered the comprehensive examinations according to the format of the French model. German majors are now required to develop a research topic, formulate a thesis, and present a critical reading of one or several German-language literary works or films, or research and present a cultural or historical event or theme in one or more countries of the German-language area. The student engages in an in-depth reading and analysis of primary and secondary material. S/he then presents her/his work in a senior thesis that is written in German (20-25 pages). The second component of the senior comprehensive exam in German is comprised of an oral presentation of the senior thesis to the German faculty. During this oral presentation of about 30-45 minutes the student presents her/his thesis and main arguments and responds to questions from the German faculty.

The rubrics for evaluating the thesis and the oral presentation are attached in a separate document.

Curricular improvements

Starting in fall 2013, there will be a change to the format of the senior seminar. Instead of the current GER 452 (Senior Seminar), senior German majors will enroll in a new course, GER 488 (Special Topics in German Studies) in the fall semester of their senior year. This seminar is a research seminar that prepares the students to an in-depth study of a selected topic in the literature, film, and culture of the German-speaking countries. The content of this seminar will change each year to ensure that it is up-to-date and linked to current research in the field. The

seminar will be taught by various faculty members in rotation in an effort to introduce the seniors to faculty research areas and their current projects. Students enrolled in GER 488 will be guided through the steps involved in defining and completing a research project. They will find a topic, conduct research through intensive and in-depth study of primary and secondary source material, formulate a thesis, write a prospectus that outlines their research project, compose an outline for their research paper, and finally submit a 10-page research paper written in German by the end of the fall semester.

In the spring semester of their senior year, all German majors will enroll in GER 489 (Senior Research Seminar). This seminar will guide the students in expanding a previously written seminar paper (ideally the paper for GER 488) into their senior thesis. In a colloquium format, students will present their readings of the primary and secondary materials to their peers and instructor and they will work on completing their senior thesis. An integral component of GER 489 is to practice oral presentation skills. Students will prepare and present a number of short research presentations in class and also practice the presentation of their senior thesis. The last third of the semester will be devoted to preparing the majors to the realities of the job market. Students will compose resumes, write application letters, and practice job interviews in German.

The senior comprehensive exam will remain the same as in AY 2011/12: Students complete a research thesis (20-25 pages in German) and present it in an oral presentation to the German faculty. The rubrics for the written and oral thesis will also remain the same as for AY 2011/12.