

Program Assessment: *Annual Report*

Program(s): Russian Studies, B. A.

Department: Languages, Literatures, and Cultures

College/School: Arts and Sciences

Date: May 28th, 2019

Primary Assessment Contact: Dr. Elizabeth Blake

1. Which program student learning outcomes were assessed in this annual assessment cycle?

Assessment for the B. A. was conducted at the 4XXX-level as part of the requirements for the major. It was based on a final class presentation followed by a question and answer session, so it was primarily an exercise in the presentational mode.

Learning Outcome being assessed: When students complete the B.A. in Russian, they will be able to interact in the target language (speaking and writing) at a minimum level of Intermediate-Mid on the ACTFL proficiency scale.

Presentational (Speaking): Student can make a presentation in a generally organized way on school, on education, and on researched topics.

2. What data/artifacts of student learning were collected for each assessed outcome? Were Madrid student artifacts included?

Analyses of student oral performance were collected for the assessment of the target group. For some students, writing samples were included. Madrid students were not included.

3. How did you analyze the assessment data? What was the process? Who was involved?

NOTE: If you used rubrics as part of your analysis, please include them in an appendix.

Two instructors in the 4XXX-level language courses analyzed the final researched oral presentations (with a topic chosen by the individual student) and subsequent discussions in Russian within the context of a project for the course. Assessment was conducted according to the ACTFL Can-Do statements with the benchmark being the Intermediate-Mid Level for speaking. The assessment plan is attached in Appendix A. Indirect assessments are mentioned in Appendix B. Summary of Data Assessment is in Appendix C. Summary of Data Assessment (Fall 2018) is in Appendix D. Summary of Data Assessment (Spring 2019) is in Appendix E.

4. What did you learn from the data? Summarize the major findings of your analysis for each assessed outcome.

NOTE: If necessary, include any tables, charts, or graphs in an appendix.

Assessment for the major was conducted on three seniors graduating in 2019. Another graduating major is a heritage speaker and was a tutor for the program but was not officially assessed, as the student had taken the course before assessment was conducted. Of those assessed, two out of three met expectations whereas one exceeded them. Students were able to chronologically and logically order their speech acts in sentence-level and paragraph-level utterances with greatly varying degrees of accuracy that still display a

notable impact of their native language on sentence construction and at the lexical level. The student, who exceeded expectations, communicated more in paragraph-level discourse, in a more accurate manner, with a more frequent usage of advanced level phrases, and with narration structured according to logical temporal frames. This presentation showed emerging evidence of the ability to provide a detailed and well-supported argument, thereby indicating a development toward professional discourse.

- In the 4010 and 4980 classes, 1/3 of the majors exceeded expectations and 2/3 of the majors met expectations according to the assessment in the presentational mode. Three out of four majors graduating (including two not assessed) have in-country experience, with greatly varying degrees of length and diverse experiences in Russia. The students were assessed in two separate classes, one of which was only one credit, so the assessments differed to some degree. However, in the oral presentations, which were the focus of this year's collective assessment, the similar format of presentational mode followed by a discussion period was adopted.
- Since all of these majors have either met or exceeded the minimum Intermediate-Mid level, the program is graduating students with the minimum level of spoken Russian. Students were able both to present and to handle question-and-answer sessions in which they were able to communicate in unpredictable situations. They demonstrated control over basic structures and verbal forms and could reformulate, when needed, for communicative goals. Students with more in-country experience expressed themselves with more fluidity but without improved accuracy, although self-correction (especially with the prompting of a more advanced interlocutor) was an effective means of improving communication.

5. How did your analysis inform meaningful change? How did you *use the analyzed data to make or implement recommendations for change* in pedagogy, curriculum design, or your assessment plan?

This year courses in literature and theology were revised to work more intentionally on the development of writing in both of these disciplines, owing to concerns raised last year, which appears to have been an anomaly. A culture course was approved for the A&S Core diversity requirement, so this is recognition that the course contributes to the goal of developing students' intercultural knowledge.

To improve self-correction in language usage in the Russian majors, the coordinator in the first-year labs designed a semester-long project demanding greater student accountability for self-correction at the beginning level.

Instructors in the 4XXX-level courses intentionally worked well before the presentations to build students' speaking and writing skills in order to prepare them for the final presentation. For example, in the 4980 course, the following format was adopted:

- In preparation for the textual summary, the student read, analyzed, and compared texts from different periods by authors of different genders addressing trauma and disability studies to investigate both historical contexts and coping mechanisms of those facing various challenges. Vocabulary checks, True/False questions, short answer questions, and short essays were focused exercises adopted to improve accuracy and to activate the vocabulary necessary for the topic. The one-on-one format of the independent study allowed the student a great deal of opportunity to practice spoken Russian.
- Two essays, one analytical in nature and one a biographical summary, allowed the student to practice formulating ideas in a format similar to the one used for the presentation. As the biography was on the author for the presentation, correction

was provided in advance of the presentation so that the student received partial feedback on the presentation beforehand. The structure of the presentation was likewise outlined beforehand.

- As a final check of the contents of the presentation, an extensive discussion lasting about an hour followed the presentation.

6. Did you follow up (“close the loop”) on past assessment work? If so, what did you learn? (*For example, has that curriculum change you made two years ago manifested in improved student learning today, as evidenced in your recent assessment data and analysis?*)

1. Although we have not assessed officially the same learning outcome as last year, the course instructors noted the improvement based on changes made in the courses’ writing assignments.
2. All students met the assessment goal of Intermediate-Mid speaking capability, so this is progress on closing the loop.

IMPORTANT: Please submit any revised/updated assessment plans to the University Assessment Coordinator along with this report.

Appendix A

Program (Major, Minor, Core): Russian (Major)
 Department: Languages, Literatures, and Cultures
 College/School: Arts & Sciences

Program Learning Outcomes	Curriculum Mapping	Assessment Methods	Assessment Data
<i>What do you expect all students who complete the program to know, or be able to do?</i>	<i>Where is the outcome learned/assessed (courses, internships, student teaching, clinical, etc.)?</i>	<i>How do students demonstrate their performance of the program learning outcomes? How does the program measure student performance? Distinguish your direct measures from indirect measures.</i>	<i>How does the program use assessment results to recognize success and "close the loop" to inform additional program improvement? How/when is this data shared, and with whom?</i>
<p>-Student will be able to communicate with confidence in Russian in interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational modes at the Intermediate-Mid level (based on ACTFL Can-Do statements).</p> <p>-Presentational (Speaking): Student can make a presentation in a generally organized way on school, on education, and on researched topics.</p> <p>-Presentational (Writing): Student can write on topics relating to school, work, community, and researched topics (requiring interpretive reading and/or listening) in a generally organized way in simple paragraphs with various time frames represented.</p>	<p>1. Presentational communication (Speaking): This should be assessed when the student presents as part of the final requirements for a RUSS 4XXX language course.</p> <p>2. Presentational communication (Writing): This should be assessed at the end of RUSS 4XXX – Senior Inquiry, Senior Residency or Capstone course.</p>	<p>Direct measure:</p> <p>1. Presentational communication (Speaking): Presentation within the context of a RUSS 4XXX language course.</p> <p>2. Presentational communication (Writing): Brief composition in simple paragraphs to be included as part of the student's portfolio.</p>	<p>The departmental assessment committee will review assessment results and will share them with full-time faculty in the Russian division. Changes to the program will be made in consultation with the Chair.</p>
<p>- Student can demonstrate will be able to articulate distinctive characteristics of Russian culture in the</p>	<p>Assessment: -In the student's portfolio will be kept assignments from courses that attest to this intercultural</p>	<p>Direct measure: Presentation in connection with RUSS 3XXX, RUSS 4XXX, or Senior Inquiry.</p>	<p>The departmental assessment committee will review assessment results and will share them with full-time faculty in the Russian</p>

<p>fields of architecture, art, history, literature, music, philosophy, political science, and theology.</p> <p>- Undergraduate majors will demonstrate an ability to analyze critically famous narratives in prose and will articulate how Russian literary, historical, and cultural traditions are situated within global contexts.</p>	<p>competency.</p> <p>-This can be assessed in connection with courses RUSS 2XXX, RUSS 3XXX, RUSS 4XXX.</p>	<p>Indirect measure:</p> <p>-Participation in study abroad.</p> <p>-Placement of graduating seniors into related graduate and professional programs.</p>	<p>division. Changes to the program will be made in consultation with the Chair.</p>
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Appendix B

Indirect Assessments (2018-2019)

1. We had an end-of-the-year party to celebrate the year's achievements, future plans, and past cultural experiences for those in the program. Five faculty members joined a number of majors and minors in a Russo-American meal and a discussion of the present and future of the Russian Studies program. A similar gathering earlier in the year was designed to discuss upcoming courses and encourage enrollments.
2. As a further indirect measure of program assessment, 2 Russian majors participated in the annual Symposium of the Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures in April 2019. The students presented their research projects on topics in Russian culture. Afterward the students responded to questions from the gathered audience. These presentations and the subsequent discussion demonstrated the students' capacity to research topics in Russian culture as well as their ability to articulate distinctive characteristics of Russian culture in the fields of film, art, and culture.
3. As one more indirect measure of program assessment, two panels on living abroad and on Russian music were organized for Atlas Week in connection with the Russian Studies program and the Russian Club.
4. The three inductees into the Honors Society Dobro Slovo were another indirect measure of student success.
5. Two students who studied abroad last year, one on the Bard-Smolny program and another on a Fulbright-Hays Group-Project Abroad Program, "Siberia by Southwest 2018: An Intensive, Project-Based Russian Immersion" (organized and coordinated through the University of Texas Austin College of Liberal Arts) presented on their experiences in the fall. It encouraged some of the program's students at the lower levels to plan to go abroad in the coming year, and one of the students was featured in a student spotlight by the department.
6. In the academic year 2018-2019, the SLU Russian Club, an officially recognized student organization, organized 11 meetings along with several other events. These meetings included gatherings where students played the Russian version of Scrabble, learned the authentic Russian card game "Durak", watched Russian language films and answered trivia about Russian culture and history. Students of different Russian proficiency levels regularly attend these meetings, helping to foster a sense of community among the students in the program as well as inviting non-major/minor students to become involved in the Russian club activities. The student members of the Russian club twice went to have dinner at restaurants as a collective group. At the end-of-the-semester dinner, two Russian program faculty members joined 12 students, representing nearly all levels of Russian language study in the program, at Racanelli's New York Pizzeria. The club successfully elected executive board members for the next academic year, ensuring that this student organization will continue to operate in the coming semesters.
7. Two graduating students served as Russian tutors for our program.
8. A graduating double major is continuing studies for an M. A. in preparation for social work in Central Europe.
9. A graduating double major is in a Nuclear Medicine internship.

10. A graduating minor received an 1818 Community Grant to support his work with the Transition Center of Saint Louis.
11. A graduating double major has accepted a position with Enterprise.
12. A graduate of the program received an M. A. in Slavic Languages and Literatures from the University of Kansas.

Appendix C

Summary of Data Regarding Assessment Russian Studies, B. A.

Inasmuch as the guidelines suggest that not every outcome should be assessed on an annual basis, the program chose to assess spoken Russian in the presentational mode, and three majors were assessed as part of the 4XXX-level language requirement. Students were permitted to select their own topics of interest, which included literature, film, and culture in the Russian language. Instructors worked with the students one-on-one to make sure that they were able to structure the presentation, to find the interpretive language necessary for analyzing their sources, and to address issues of accuracy and fluency before the presentation. Students drew on a number of sources to produce interpretive writing in sharing their thoughts in the presentational mode.

Conclusions

- In the 4010 and 4980 classes, 1/3 of the majors exceeded expectations and 2/3 of the majors met expectations according to the assessment in the presentational mode. Three out of four majors graduating (including two not assessed) have in-country experience, with greatly varying degrees of length and diverse experiences in Russia. The students were assessed in two separate classes, one of which was only one credit, so the assessments differed to some degree. However, in the oral presentations, which were the focus of this year's collective assessment, the similar format of presentational mode followed by a discussion period was adopted.
- Since all of these majors have either met or exceeded the minimum Intermediate-Mid level, the program is graduating students with the minimum level of spoken Russian. Students were able both to present and to handle question-and-answer sessions in which they were able to communicate in unpredictable situations. They demonstrated control over basic structures and verbal forms and could reformulate, when needed, for communicative goals. Students with more in-country experience expressed themselves with more fluidity but without improved accuracy, although self-correction (especially with the prompting of a more advanced interlocutor) was an effective means of improving communication.

Appendix D

Fluency in Russian - RUSS 4010-01 (Fall 2018) Summary of Data from Assessment Prepared by Zdenko Manudušić, Ph.D.

One major, who is scheduled to graduate in Spring 2019, and three minors were assessed as part of the 4XXX-level course. The primary emphasis was on speaking in the presentational mode, but writing was also assessed for all four of the students.

1. Presentational (Speaking): Student can make a presentation in a generally organized way on school, on education, and on researched topics. 25% (1/4 of those assessed) exceeded expectations and 75% (3/4 of those assessed) met expectations.

On their researched topics, 3 of the students assessed met outlined expectations, since they spoke in the target language for an extended period of time, communicating their interpretation of web and print research conducted in Russian. These students showed emerging evidence of the ability to tell or retell a story and provide additional description. They mostly communicated in discrete sentences, but at times also combined strings of sentences into simple paragraphs. Their speech demonstrated control of basic sentence structure and verb forms as well as mostly accurate usage of the target language. At times, these presentations included pauses, reformulations, and self-corrections as students searched for adequate vocabulary and appropriate language forms to express themselves. These students also included few advanced-level phrases to introduce and relate their thoughts in order to establish connections between ideas and different parts of the presentation. Due to the fact that in 2 of these presentations there was noticeable use of memorized language, the post-presentation discussion, which included the participation of the instructor and other students in the course, was utilized for assessment. During these discussions, students were able to express their own thoughts and present information in response to questions, demonstrating an increasing awareness of errors and the ability to self-correct and/or edit. The student, who exceeded outlined expectations, communicated more in strings of sentences and demonstrated the accurate usage of the target language. This student frequently used advanced-level phrases in her speech and indicated the ability to narrate and describe in the major time frames of past, present and future. Her presentation showed emerging evidence of the ability to provide a well-supported argument, including detailed evidence in support of her point-of-view, which indicates the student's development toward professional discourse.

2. Presentational (Writing): Student can write on topics relating to school, work, community, and researched topics (requiring interpretive reading and/or listening) in a generally organized way in simple paragraphs with various time frames represented. 75% (3/4 of those assessed) met expectations and 25% (1/4 of those assessed) did not meet expectations.

In the written compositions, 3 of the students assessed met expectations, with some variance ranging between writing at the Intermediate-Mid level and extending toward Intermediate-High. The students were able to write short compositions of 300 words in the target language, which summarized their research topic. Their compositions loosely combine and link sentences into paragraphs, incorporating a limited amount of cohesive devices. The writing styles of these students demonstrate patterns of oral discourse and show evidence of control of basic sentence structure and verb forms. These compositions did include errors, such as occasional mistakes

with the command of aspect or time markers. The quality of the writing declines in places where the students attempted more expansive elaboration. The one student who did not meet expectations did write in paragraph-length discourse, but most of the sentences were

recombinations of learned vocabulary and structures. Although there are passages in the composition where a string of sentences is well coordinated, the student failed to demonstrate a consistent command of structures such as verb-noun agreement, verbal aspect, and case usage (with verbs and prepositions). This would suggest a further need of the program to focus on the development of writing skills in the target language.

Appendix E

Fluency in Russian - RUSS 4980 (Spring 2019)

Caveats

This was a one-credit course for a graduating senior to complete the 4XXX-level language requirement. As there is no ability to maintain anonymity, the performance of the student has been combined in the general summary but will not be discussed here. Instead, I will provide a description of the project.

Oral Presentation Format

- Owing to the individualized nature of the instruction, the course was designed around the student's interest in trauma studies in preparation for the final presentation. In preparation for the reading and comparison of sources, the independent study began with a review of participles.
- In preparation for the textual summary, the student read, analyzed, and compared texts from different periods by authors of different genders addressing trauma and disability studies to investigate both historical contexts and coping mechanisms of those facing various challenges. Vocabulary checks, True/False questions, short answer questions, and short essays were focused exercises adopted to improve accuracy and to activate the vocabulary necessary for the topic. The one-on-one format of the independent study allowed the student a great deal of opportunity to practice spoken Russian.
- Two essays, one analytical in nature and one a biographical summary, allowed the student to practice formulating ideas in a format similar to the one used for the presentation. As the biography was on the author for the presentation, correction was provided in advance of the presentation so that the student received partial feedback on the presentation beforehand. The structure of the presentation was likewise outlined beforehand.
- As a final check of the contents of the presentation, an extensive discussion lasting about an hour followed the presentation, the results of which are included in the aggregate summary. The description follows the guidelines established for assessment.