

## **Department of Languages and Cultures of Asia Assessment Plan**

(approved by the Department of LCA, May 2, 2007)

### **Undergraduate Program**

The Department offers courses in the study of Central and Southwest Asia, South Asia and Southeast Asia with catalogue listings under two prefixes: LCA (521) for content courses in the humanities, and LCA (522) for language courses. Under the new program adopted by the Department in May 2006, an undergraduate student will now be able to major in LCA with one of three options: (a) the study of at least two LCA regions, coupled with the intensive study of one or more LCA languages up to the advanced level; (b) the study of two or more LCA regions with a combination of humanistic content courses and language courses or (c) the intensive humanistic study of two or more LCA regions up to the advanced level, without language training.

#### **Goals:**

Students majoring under all three options will:

- Achieve a broad, basic understanding of the histories, societies, and cultures of at least two LCA regions of Asia.
- Acquire skills in analytical and critical thinking in relation to Asian humanities and gain familiarity with theoretical perspectives in the humanities more broadly. Strong critical thinking and communication skills will be developed, including the ability to formulate questions.

Students majoring under Option A and B in addition, will:

- Achieve competency in one or more LCA language up to the advanced level sufficient for entry into graduate study or professional employment

#### **Means and Methods of Assessment:**

The following assessment strategies are used to obtain information on students achievement of the goals listed above:

- 1) Levels of proficiency in the LCA languages as defined by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) to be measured under the supervision of the LCA Language Pedagogy Coordinator
- 2) Course evaluations to provide course-related assessment data and information about attainment of departmental objectives.
- 3) Regular meetings of the LCA undergraduate advisor with students to evaluate course selections, personalize major development, and promote sequencing and strategies for accomplishing student and departmental goals.

4) Mandatory capstone seminar for all majors designed to reinforce a shared community of interest among LCA students, to establish a baseline for methodological understandings of the field, and to evaluate both individually and collectively the intellectual, ethical, and communicative achievements of the students

5) Exit survey given to all graduating seniors that requests feedback about the LCA major experience and self-critical evaluations of students' roles and performance as members of LCA. The students will be surveyed about their sense of how well they perform with respect to these learning goals. The survey will also ask students to evaluate overall program quality, ability to locate and register for courses, quality of instruction, quality of departmental advising.

### **Dissemination of Results:**

The LCA Academic Planning Committee will review the five assessment measures annually and report to the faculty on the effectiveness of LCA programs. The APC will be charged with providing the department's assessment reports for use in the ongoing evaluation of curricular, co-curricular, and research-based activities in the department. Results may be used to revise courses, major curricula, communication with students, and other aspects of the program as needed. The Department will, on request of the Dean, submit a periodic report on assessment activities summarizing assessment projects undertaken and changes made as a result of assessment.

### **Graduate Program**

#### **Goals:**

LCA M.A. and Ph.D. programs aim to:

- Provide students with advanced speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills in LCA languages for independent field-work as well as archival research, and for living and working in an Asian region or society;
- Familiarize students with the major scholarly traditions in the humanistic study of Asia broadly, and in the study of particular regions, countries, languages, disciplines, and/or fields with substantive exposure to current methodological and theoretical issues;
- Prepare students for academic or professional careers in the fields of Asian literatures, religions, or both with specializations in the study of one or more Asian literatures, cultures and/or religions.
- In addition to course work, students are prepared for a professional career by gaining valuable professional experience teaching sections of language and culture courses. They are also encouraged to give papers at national conferences.

**Means of Assessment:**

Within the graduate program the department distinguishes *four* major stages: incoming, M.A. degree; examinations preliminary to the Ph.D. dissertation; PhD dissertation work and beyond. Assessment at these stages involves:

- 1) An intensive advising relationship for every graduate student as the primary point of contact between students and the department. Advising provides the best qualitative basis for judging departmental activities.
- 2) Course evaluations provide course-related information and details about the achievement of departmental objectives.
- 3) Committee oversight of MA thesis and progress: three faculty members work with each student on the thesis. Students who apply to the PhD program are required to obtain a high pass in their MA thesis in order to be admitted.
- 4) The system of qualifying examinations and defenses, for doctoral candidates, offers the most explicit moment for testing the success of the department's collective intellectual efforts with graduate students.
- 5) Each graduate student prepares a prospectus for the dissertation for review by his/her PhD committee of at least three faculty members.
- 6) Graduate student reading groups provide a useful forum not only for intellectual exchange about specific readings relevant to the whole department but also for more general discussions about trajectories and both short- and long-term in LCA.
- 7) Student placements and post-graduate employment are carefully monitored and used to assess the success of the department program.

**Dissemination of Results:**

The LCA Academic Planning Committee will review the means and measures of evaluation tool annually and report to the faculty on the effectiveness of LCA programs. The APC will be charged with providing the department's assessment reports for use in the ongoing evaluation of curricular, co-curricular, and research-based activities in the department. A discussion of assessment activities in the graduate program will be included in the department's periodic report to the Dean.