Department of Slavic Languages and Literature
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Assessment Report
Spring 2013

Prepared and Submitted by

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UNDERGRADUATE MAJOR IN RUSSIAN

Russian Language Enrollments and Outcomes

Abstract: In accordance with the plan for the assessment of the undergraduate major in Russian language and literature submitted to and approved by the College of Letters and Sciences of the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2006 and updated in 2009, the language program director collected data on several different instruments in order to assess learner outcomes in the Russian-language program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In the spring semester of 2013 we assessed reading comprehension skills of students in the first and second year of Russian and oral proficiency skills of students at all levels. In addition, students in the Russian Flagship Program were assessed in all four skills (speaking, reading, listening, and writing) in the Fall of 2012 and in speaking in the Spring of 2013. Language assessments, enrollment patterns, and national prizes indicate that the Slavic Department's Russian language program is functioning very well, providing students with the opportunity to excel in Russian language studies. Independent verification of our success comes from the comparative performance of our students against the performance of students from other post-secondary institutions in the selection process for study abroad programs sponsored or managed by the American Councils for International Education, including the Russian Flagship academic-year capstone program at St. Petersburg University, the Russian Language and Area Studies Program (RLASP), and the US Department of State-funded Critical Language Scholarship Program; the highly competitive National Security Education Program Boren Scholarship to support study abroad; and the American Council of Teachers of Russian National Post-Secondary Russian Essay Contest.

I. Enrollment Patterns

The number of Russian majors has risen significantly in the last three years, as demonstrated in the following table:

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Table 1   Russian Majors, 2010 – 2013

	Total Russian Majors	Russian Lang & Lit Majors	Russian Lang & Civ Majors	Russian Native Speaker Majors
May 2013	58	24	31	3
May 2012	53	20	30	3
May 2011	45	21	20	4
May 2010	47	20	21	6

We attribute this increase to our strong recruitment efforts and to the growing number of students interested in the Russian Flagship Program. Because of the significant overlap between the Russian Flagship Program and Russian Major requirements, most students who are accepted into the Flagship Program also choose to declare the Russian major. Many are double majors.

Russian Language Class Enrollments

Table 2   Russian Enrollments, 2009 – present*

*not including summer enrollments

Course	Fall 2009	Spring 2010	Fall 2010	Spring 2011	Fall 2011	Spring 2012	Fall 2012	Spring 2013
Slavic 101	80	-	112	-	91	-	82	
Slavic 102	-	62	-	59	-	50		63
Slavic 203	55	-	35	-	44	-	35	
Slavic 204	-	33	-	22	-	32		21
Slavic 275	22	-	24	-	24	-	25	
Slavic 276	-	18	-	16	-	14		13
Slavic 321	25	-	17	-	22	-	20	
Slavic 322	-	21	-	19	-	18		12
Slavic 433					11		13	
Slavic 434						6		14
Slavic 560							14	
Slavic 705		3				8		
Total Russian language course enrollments	182	177	188	116	192	128	189	123

The above table demonstrates that fall-semester Russian-language enrollments have remained strong and stable, despite national fluctuations in Russian enrollments. (See http://www1.american.edu/research/CCPCR/COLLEGEENROLL.htm for comparative data.) These numbers do not reflect enrollments in study abroad, and we believe that enrollments are lower in the spring semester, in part because of student participation in

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spring-semester study abroad programs. (We encourage students to study in Russia during the spring, rather than the fall semester, when possible, because of Russia's climate and daylight patterns.) We will continue to track enrollment data and will collate that information with study abroad data.

The enrollment numbers in the table are also affected by summer enrollments in Slavic 117/118 (intensive second-year Russian) and Slavic 279 (intensive third-year Russian): students planning on summer study have enrolled in the next higher course level for the fall 2013 semester.

The decrease in the number of students in first-year Russian from the 2011-12 academic year to the 2012-2013 academic year can be explained by the elimination of the fifth section Russian 101. Since the fall of 2012 we were able to offer only four sections of Russian 101, which limited our initial fall semester enrollments to 92. In addition, up to 10% attrition is typical in the first few weeks of Russian 101 because of its level of difficulty and a significant homework load. Considering these circumstances, enrollments in 1st-semester Russian are strong and are comparable with those of previous years. We are also encouraged by very strong retention rates demonstrated at all levels this year. These numbers reflect the strength of our program and its potential for continuing growth.

Retention Patterns

At the time of submission of this report, enrollments in Russian-language classes for summer and fall 2013 are strong. The data below show retention rates between four main levels in the Russian language sequence:

First to Second Year Russian
Spring 2013 enrollment in 2nd semester Russian: 63 (Slavic 102)
Summer 2013 enrollment in Intensive 2nd Year Russian: 16 (Slavic 117/118)
Fall 2013 enrollment in 3rd semester Russian: 44 (Slavic 203)

The total number of students continuing in 2nd Year Russian (both summer and fall) is 60, which is a 95% retention rate.

Second to Third Year Russian
Spring 2013 enrollment in 4th semester Russian: 21 (Slavic 204)
Summer 2013 enrollment in Intensive 2nd Year Russian: 16 (Slavic 117/118)
Summer 2013 enrollment in Intensive 3nd Year Russian: 5 (Slavic 279)
Fall 2013 enrollment in 5th semester Russian: 29 (Slavic 275)

The total number of students continuing from 2nd- to 3rd Year Russian (both summer and fall) is 34 and represents a retention rate of 91.9%. More than 10 current 1st year students will take our Intensive Second Year Russian course, SL 117/118, during the summer session and enroll in SL 275 in the fall, thus completing three years of Russian in two years.

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Third to Fourth Year Russian
Spring 2013 enrollment in 6nd semester Russian: 13 (Slavic 276)
Summer 2013 enrollment in Intensive 3nd Year Russian: 5 (Slavic 279)
Fall 2013 enrollment in 7th semester Russian: 12 (Slavic 321)

Excluding students taking Russian in the summer on the American Councils Russian Language and Area Studies study abroad program (RLASP), this is a 66.7% (two-thirds) retention rate.

It is also worth noting that although the greatest drop in enrollments occurs between first- and second-semester Russian – generally attributed to the difficulty of the language, something students do not usually anticipate – that attrition from SL 101 and 102 has declined over the past three years. In 2010-11 52.7% of students continued to second-semester Russian, reflecting national averages of about 50% retention (not reflected in the above-cited site, which does show first- to second-year retention data); this year, the number of students continuing to SL 102 was 76.8%.

Russian Flagship Enrollments

We list the enrollments for the Russian Flagship program separately below. Russian Flagship students are enrolled in Russian classes and are therefore included in the major, enrollment, and retention figures discussed above; however, they are not required to have a Russian major, although they frequently do major in Russian because of close overlap between course requirements. The Russian Flagship program is neither a major nor a certificate program. Because satisfactory progress in the Russian Flagship program is tied to attainment of proficiency targets at each level, we did not want to make a lack of progress in the Russian Flagship program a hindrance to students' graduation.

As is apparent from these numbers, our Russian Flagship program is growing rapidly. The Russian Flagship program accepts applications once each semester, on 15 November and 15 March. As of this writing, seven new Flagship students were admitted for Fall 2013, but they are not listed in the table below, pending confirmation by September that they will indeed officially enroll in the program.

Table 3   Russian Flagship Enrollments, 2010 – present

Levels	Fall 2010	Spring 2011	Fall 2011	Spring 2012	Fall 2012	Spring 2013
1st-year Russian		1		6		9
2nd-year Russian				5	4	4
3rd-year Russian	2	3	7	7	4	8
4th-year Russian	4	4	5	6	5	5

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5th-year Russian			3	3	14	12
St. Petersburg AY capstone program			3	3	1	1
Total	6	8	18	30	28	39

II. Recruitment and Program-Building

Recruitment and program-building for the Russian language program, the Russian major, and the Russian Flagship Program are closely intertwined and follow a common strategy.

We hope to continue to attract solid numbers of students to the Russian major by participating in campus-wide events such as SOAR, World Languages Day, and Majors Fair. In addition, we are working closely with the Russian Flagship Program, managed jointly by the Slavic Department and the Language Institute, in collaboration with CREECA and the SLA doctoral program, on developing new ways of spreading information about the Russian program and publicizing both the Russian major and the Russian Flagship Program. Our extensive recruitment efforts this year included participation in academic resource fairs for admitted, incoming and current students; individual meetings with incoming freshmen and transfer students at Summer Orientation, Advising and Registration (SOAR); targeted emails to incoming L&S students; information sessions for prospective students; visits to Russian and area studies classes; targeted emails; print flyers; and ads in student newspapers.

An additional new development since the last assessment report was the establishment of Russkii Dom, the Russian-language floor in the International Learning Community in Adams Hall. Enrollments for Russkii Dom have been fluctuating, but may be showing an upward trend:

2011-12: 5
2012-13: 4 (spring semester: 3)
2013-14 (projected): 6 (spring semester: 7)

In addition to First-Year Interest Groups, Russkii Dom, in which residents are required to take a Russian class in order to maintain their Russian-language skills, should help generate further interest in Russian-language study.

III. Assessment of Language Proficiency

Communicative Competence: Oral Proficiency Interviews

The Language Program Director, one Slavic Department faculty member (the Flagship Director), and three Slavic graduate students are certified by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) to conduct oral proficiency interviews, a

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standardized means of assessing an individual's command of a spoken language recognized throughout North America as a valid assessment instrument. Certified testers conducted oral proficiency interviews with two students at each level of Russian (Slavic 102 – 2nd Semester Russian, Slavic 204 – 4th Semester Russian, Slavic 276 – 6th Semester Russian, and Slavic 322 – 8th Semester Russian, respectively). One of the students at each level was selected randomly and represents the average level of speaking proficiency attained by UW-Madison students. The second student was recruited among the highest performing students at each level. These students represent the best learning outcomes in our program.

The interviews were not double rated by a second certified interviewer and are thus not official ACTFL oral proficiency interviews, but may, nonetheless, be used as an indicator of the level of oral proficiency attained by students in Russian-language courses at these levels. Students who participated in these interviews volunteered; the only incentive they were provided was the possibility of practice using their Russian.

Table 4   **Results of Oral Proficiency Interviews**

	2nd Semester	4th Semester	6th Semester	8th Semester
Student One	Intermediate Low	Intermediate Mid	Intermediate Mid	Intermediate Mid
Student Two	Intermediate Mid	Intermediate Mid	Intermediate High	Advanced Mid

The ratings of Student Two at the 6th and 8th semester level are especially impressive, as neither of these students have yet had the opportunity to study in Russia. However, both of these students are in the Russian Flagship Program, through which they receive two hours per week of individual and small-group tutoring. Since the establishment of the Russian Flagship Program in 2010, proficiency levels of students in upper-level Russian courses have been higher than in previous years. Because Flagship students are integrated with non-Flagship students in most of their Russian courses, the standards and expectations are higher for all students. As a result, non-Flagship students have also been demonstrating higher levels of performance and stronger outcomes.

It is also important to remember when interpreting these results that the difficulty of moving from novice- proficiency to intermediate-level proficiency is not comparable with the difficulty of moving from intermediate-level proficiency to advanced-level proficiency, and so forth. The "distance" between each major level on the proficiency scale (novice, intermediate, advanced, superior) is not equal; the effort and time required to move from one major level to the next increases geometrically at each higher level. In other words, the scale is *not* linear, but rather *geometric* in nature. (ACTFL represents it in the form of a reverse pyramid, with Novice at the narrow end and Superior at the broad end, to reflect the number of hours required to attain each higher level: http://www.ode.state.or.us/teachlearn/subjects/secondlanguages/curriculum/actflinvertedpyramid.pdf.)

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The results of this year's oral proficiency testing of non-Flagship students are comparable with previous assessment reports from our department and with published research on oral proficiency attained by students in various stages of language instruction in foreign languages in general (for instance, Carroll, 1967 and Magnan, 1986) and in Russian (Thompson, 1996; Rifkin, 2005). While the Slavic Department would like to see higher levels of oral proficiency attained by non-Flagship undergraduates who complete the entire four-year sequence, it is unlikely that higher levels of oral proficiency can be attained by students who take the regular sequence of courses in Russian without studying abroad, as suggested by Brecht, Davidson and Ginsberg (1993). The Slavic Department encourages all students to participate in study abroad programs, especially during the junior year; the University of Wisconsin-Madison has an agreement with American Councils for International Education (AC) regarding study abroad programs sponsored by AC in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Vladimir that are available for UW-Madison students for residency credit. For more information about the study abroad programs, see the American Councils web page (americancouncils.org) or the web page of the UW-Madison Office of International Academic Programs at www.wisc.edu/studyabroad.

Grammatical Competence

Due to scheduling problems we were unable to test the grammatical competence of all students in the Russian Program this year. However, a computer-mediated grammar test was administered to Russian Flagship students at all levels in the Fall of 2012. This test consists of an extended text in Russian with English cues for 70 blanks. Students are instructed to fill in each blank based on the context and the English cue provided. Each student's test was scored as the sum of correct responses out of a possible 70 correct responses.

The test we administered this year is a new assessment instrument developed by the language program director, Dr. Anna Tumarkin, with assistance from Flagship Program Assessment and Curriculum Development TAs. The funding for developing the test was provided by the UW-Madison Russian Flagship Program.

The table below lists mean scores for students at each level and compares them to mean scores from 2009, the last time this test was administered program-wide before the Flagship program was established.

Table 5   **Results of Grammar Tests**

	2nd-Year	3rd-Year	4th-Year
Mean Score 2012	25.7	36.25	47
Mean Score 2009	22	30	44

Students at all levels scored higher in 2012 than they did in 2009. The highest grammar score this year was earned by a student in fourth-year Russian: 53%. Predictably, the

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lowest score was earned by a second-year student: 21%. These results illustrate positive growth in grammatical competence that students experience as they progress in our program. Fourth Year Russian scores are especially impressive – they are comparable to the scores of Slavic Department incoming graduate students and confirm that our program prepares students to pursue advanced academic or professional careers.

Reading Competence

In this year's assessments we focused on reading skills. (We will alternate to assessing listening skills for the spring 2014 assessment.)

Ten randomly selected Slavic 102 students and sixteen Slavic 204 students took a computer-mediated reading proficiency test in April 2013. All Russian Flagship students took the same test in the Fall 2012. The test was designed in accordance with ACTFL foreign reading proficiency guidelines as a tool for evaluating student progress and proficiency growth at different levels of Russian language instruction.

The table below lists the range of reading comprehension scores for students at all levels, indicating the lowest and the highest level of proficiency achieved by students in each cohort.

Table 6   **Results of Reading Tests**

Course	Reading Mean/ Rating 2012-13	Reading Mean/ Rating 2009
1st Year	IL-IM	NM - IL
2nd Year	IM-IH	NH -IM
3rd Year	IM-AL	IM
4th Year	IH-AM	IM-IH

Ratings:

NM: Novice Mid; IL: Intermediate Low; IM: Intermediate Mid; IH: Intermediate High; AL: Advanced Low; AM: Advanced Mid. For level descriptors in all skills see: **http://actflproficiencyguidelines2012.org/**.

Test results indicate that some students achieve Intermediate Mid reading comprehension at the end of the first year of instruction, but the average level of reading comprehension does not increase much from year to year, with the average reading comprehension result at the 4th year level at Intermediate High. However, the range of reading comprehension results at each level is indicative of growth, since the high scores at each level of instruction are successively higher.

This year's results are very encouraging, because the majority of students in the 3rd-year course reached the Intermediate High level, and several students in the 4th-year course

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reached the Advanced level of reading proficiency. The 2nd-year score is also strong, indicating solid Intermediate Mid performance by the majority of students and one student reaching Intermediate High.

IV. Textbooks and Instructional Materials

The textbook used in first-year Russian, *Russian Stage One: Live from Russia*, continues to enjoy popularity among the students and instructors of that course. We are very pleased with our second-year textbook, *V Puti,* by Kagan, Miller and Kudyma. This year, as in the past, we have supplemented the second-year textbook with additional grammar and reading materials as well as contemporary Russian cartoons and films. Our third-year textbook, *Grammatika v kontekste*, is an adequate choice for that course level. Its material is outdated, but a new edition is in progress. In the meantime we supplement that textbook heavily with communicative exercises, Power Points, and exercises on grammar and structure within contemporary cultural contexts. We continue to use it in combination with The *Golden Age: Readings in Russian Literature of the Nineteenth Century* by Rosengrant, Lifsschitz, as well as with readings and video materials from the contemporary press. In fourth-year Russian, the primary textbooks is Rosengrant's *Russian in Use*, together with literary readings and supplementary listening exercises. In addition, many supplementary materials have been developed for all levels of Russian. They are stored in a searchable LessonShare database and are readily available to faculty, instructors, and TAs. In addition, we continue to maintain a database of instructional materials and assessment instruments for First Year Russian on our Learn@UW webpage. We plan to migrate the content of that database to LessonShare in 2013-14 in order to improve its accessibility and performance.

First Year
Russian Stage One: Live from Russia , Davidson, Gor and Lekic (Kendall Hunt, 2008)
START: An Introduction to the Sound and Writing Systems of Russian, Rifkin (Focus,
　　2005)

Second Year
V Puti (textbook and workbook), Kagan, Miller, Kudyma (Pearson, 2006)

Third Year
Grammatika v kontekste (textbook and workbook), Rifkin (McGraw Hill, 1996)

The Golden Age: Readings in Russian Literature of the Nineteenth Century, Rosengrant,
Lifschitz (John Wiley, 1996)

Fourth Year
Russian in Use: An Interactive Approach to Advanced Communicative Competence,
Rosengrant (Yale UP, 2006)

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V. Honors and Awards

The success of our language programs is reflected in the number of competitive scholarships, awards, and honors received by our students. All of our students applying for admission to the American Councils RLASP and Flagship study abroad programs in Russia were admitted for academic year 2012-13, summer 2013, fall 2013 and academic year 2013-14 programs. Two of our students won a highly competitive national Critical Language Scholarship, funded by the US Department of State, to fund studying Russian in the summer 2013 in Ufa. (One student had won a CLS to study in Kazan in summer 2012, and one for study in Ufa in summer 2011.) One student received a highly competitive Boren Scholarship, funded by the National Security Education Program, for study in St. Petersburg on the Flagship Program. Four other students have received a FLAS to support their participation in summer programs in Russia, and two received a FLAS to support academic-year study in Russia on the Flagship Program. In addition, Russian Flagship students apply for and receive scholarships to support both study abroad and summer study at UW-Madison.

Twelve UW-Madison students participated in the ACTR National Post-Secondary National Russian Essay Contest, and one student received Honorable Mention in this highly competitive context.

Three UW-Madison students became members of Dobro Slovo, The National Slavic Honor Society.

The Russian program at Madison is also thriving as a community, as evidenced by the success of our fall welcome (back) party, our spring majors party, the Russian table and other extra-curricular events such as lectures and concerts. In April, the Slavic Department collaborated with CREECA and the Russian Flagship Program in organizing a visit from a critically acclaimed Russian folk music ensemble from Belgium, Zolotoj Plyos. In addition, Russian majors were encouraged to attend Russian concerts and holiday celebrations organized by several Russian community groups in Madison.

VI. Plans for Future Curricular Improvements

The results of our on-going assessment program are evidence that our language program is working well. Most students achieve proficiency levels compatible with published research data on learning outcomes (e.g., Brecht, Davidson and Ginsberg 1993; Thompson 1996, Rifkin 2005), and some make remarkable gains. The Russian Flagship Program has significantly improved outcomes and therefore increased expectations of all students. We are proud of students' achievements and look forward to continuing to lead students toward successful study.

VII. Plans for Future Assessments in Russian Language Proficiency

As stated above, we intend to continue our assessments of students' Russian language proficiency, and in future to compare data systematically between Flagship and non-

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Flagship students, to see the effect of additional tutoring and other activities sponsored by the Russian Flagship program. We will also continue to monitor Russian-language enrollments both over time and in comparison with national enrollment data.

Works Cited

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Magnan, S. (1986). "Assessing Speaking Proficiency in the Undergraduate Curriculum: Data from French." *Foreign Language Annals* 19: 429-437.

Rifkin, B. (2005). A Ceiling Effect in Traditional Foreign Language Classroom Instruction: Data from Russian. *Modern Language Journal* 89: 3-18.

Thompson, I. (1996). "Assessing Foreign Language Skills: Data from Russian." *Modern Language Journal* 80: 47-65.

Waddington, P. (1992) *A First Russian Vocabulary.* Newburyport, MA: Focus Publishing Group.

RUSSIAN LITERATURE AND CULTURE

Russian majors select one of three major tracks: Russian Language & Literature, Russian Language & Civilization, and the Native Speaker track. All tracks combine level-appropriate language courses, the goals and outcomes for which has been described above, and a combination of courses in Russian literature, culture, and area studies courses offered both in and outside the Slavic Department.

Assessment Practices

In addition to assessing students' Russian language proficiency in speaking, listening, reading, and writing through both in-class assessments and the instruments described above, course instructors assess students' knowledge of various aspects of Russian literary and cultural history; students' ability to read and analyze literary texts and scholarship on literature and culture; and students' ability to synthesize material read and discussed in class within the larger historical and cultural context of each text, and thus to gain a critical understanding of, and to participate in, some of the major discussions of Russian cultural history that remain relevant to Russian contemporary discourse and the study of Russia today. Assessments of students' written and oral communication skills in English and Russian, of their critical thinking and analytical skills, and of their knowledge of Russian authors, texts, and cultural history take place within the context of Slavic Department courses in the form of participation in classroom discussions, in-class presentations, papers, and examinations.

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New Curricular Developments

The major development in Russian course offerings since the 2008 assessment report is the establishment in March 2010 of the Russian Flagship Program, which is, as mentioned above, a collaborative initiative of the Slavic Department and the Language Institute, with the Center for Russia, East Europe, and Central Asia and the Doctoral Program in Second Language Acquisition. The goal of this program is to enable students to attain Advanced-level proficiency through a combination of domestic and summer study abroad, and then to achieve Superior-level proficiency after an intensive academic year-long program of study at St. Petersburg University. In order to help students achieve Advanced-level proficiency on campus, previously a great rarity in US domestic programs (see the above-cited studies by Brecht et al, Thompson, and Rifkin, which have established that Intermediate-Mid to High proficiency has been the norm), we now provide more advanced-level language instruction in Russian, a more solid grounding in Russian cultural history and contemporary Russian culture, and the opportunity for students to analyze culturally important texts and movements and to synthesize in Russian, orally and in writing, their knowledge of various disciplines, through the establishment of the following new courses:

Slavic 433: History of Russian Culture (in Russian, 3 credits, fall semester)
Slavic 434: Contemporary Russian Culture (in Russian, 3 credits, spring semester)
Slavic 560: Capstone Seminar in Russian Literature and Culture (in Russian, 3 credits, fall semester)

In addition, we are offering Slavic 705: Special Topics in Russian Language, on a regular basis biannually (every even spring), with a focus on advanced-level listening and conversation, based on contemporary video materials that reflect important developments in contemporary Russian politics, economics, foreign relations, and culture.

These courses have attracted not only undergraduate students in the Russian Flagship Program, but also undergraduate Russian majors, non-majors with advanced-level Russian proficiency, and graduate students from the Slavic Department and CREECA.

Future Developments

As stated above, the establishment of the Russian Flagship Program has raised the average language proficiency level of students enrolled in Russian courses, because students in the Russian Flagship program have access to individual and small-group tutoring, regularly take intensive summer courses, and set high goals for themselves in order to apply for the academic-year Flagship capstone program at St. Petersburg University sponsored by American Councils for International Education.

In light of the generally higher proficiency levels, following up on our graduate curricular reform, and because of the perceived need for programmatic review, the department has, throughout the 2012-13 academic year, undertaken an examination of the undergraduate Russian major and general Russian curriculum. Our goals in undertaking this review have

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been the following: to articulate learning outcomes for our majors not only in language, but in literary and cultural knowledge, English-language oral and written communications skills, and critical thinking and analytical skills; to update our course offerings; to make double-majoring, a common and growing trend, more feasible for our students. We have examined Russian major requirements at peer institutions throughout the country and major requirements in similar language, literature, and culture programs at UW-Madison. We plan to continue this curricular review in 2013-14 and to submit a revised undergraduate major curriculum by the end of summer 2014.

BS/BA IN POLISH

Enrollments

Enrollments have been steady in our Polish language courses. We had 23 students in First Year Polish and 24 students in Advanced Polish. One student will graduate with a Polish major in May 2013. Currently there are 8 students majoring in Polish.

In the Fall of 2012 we started teaching the Advanced Polish Language Course in distance learning mode. Students from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign joined our Madison group through Skype. This required an important modification in teaching so that all students could benefit from the change. Three students from Urbana participated in the class. Although the Urbana students have satisfied their requirements by completing a four-year program of Polish, they were all so pleased with their learning experience results that they have registered for taking the next Polish course at UW-Madison in the Fall of 2013.

Assessment Tools for First Year Polish

Students were assessed regularly during the 2012-13 academic year through tests, exams, and oral participation.

Written assessments:
1. Written quizzes (5 minutes) about 10 per semester
2. Written tests (50 minutes) about 4 per semester
3. Midterm and final exam

Oral assessments
1. Short answers / dialogs in pairs with another student about 4 per semesters
2. Short face to face conversation with the instructor about 2 per semester
3. Two oral exams: midterm and final

Comprehension assessments: at least 5 per semester.

At the end of the First Year students participated in oral proficiency interviews and wrote a comprehensive final exam.

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Poland is a member of the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE) and we sometimes use official tests done by the Polish Association of Language Testers that refer to European standards. The teaching follows the standards of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR: see http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Cadre1_en.asp):

A1 - "Breakthrough Level "
A2 - "Waystage Level"
B1 - "Threshold User"
B2 - "Independent User/Vantage"
C1 - "Competent User/Effective Operational Proficiency"
C2 - "Good User/ Mastery"

At the end of the First Year, Polish students are ready to start at the A2 level.

Assessment Tools for Advanced Polish Language

The Advanced Polish Language course, required for the Polish major, is largely based on contemporary Polish prose and poetry, and also includes texts from newspapers and constant review of grammar. Since this is an "intensive writing" class, students are expected to write four essays during the semester as well as numerous short compositions. In the 2012-13 academic year students' assessment was based on their participation in class, written exams and essays. Since students start this advanced class with big differences in their linguistic skills, the main factor in grading is their individual effort. I am happy to say that all students worked very hard and made satisfactory progress. Final grades are mostly "A." The main challenge for the instructor is the combination of many levels in one class: third and fourth year of Polish language, graduate students with undergraduate students. Students in this course come with very different linguistic skills: some speak fluently but cannot write, others do not understand the basic grammatical concepts, and few are native speakers. This makes the class a difficult but also a very rewarding teaching experience.

Because this course included 3 students from Urbana-Champaign, the instructor had additional work in correcting their homework via email and in leading oral activities with them by Skype at least 50 minutes once a week.

Samples of Work in the Advanced Polish Language Course

The papers collected at the end of Spring 2013 indicate that the majority of our students are able to express themselves well in Polish. The topics of the final paper were related to the analysis of a contemporary Polish novel. Students made significant progress in writing.

Awards and Citations

Three undergraduate Polish majors were awarded the Lapinski Scholarship, and one graduate student was awarded the Lapinski fellowship. The Edmund I. Zawacki Award

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for outstanding achievement in the study of the Polish language, literature and culture went to one undergraduate and one graduate student.

Ongoing Improvements in Teaching Polish

On both levels, First Year Polish and Advanced Polish, we used a Web platform (collaborative sites) in order to communicate with students between the class sessions. First Year students were very active in participating in various blogs. Advanced Students communicated through the collaborative site in creating group projects. We used Critical Reader, an interactive application for grammar exercises.

Future Plans

We will continue to work hard to attract students to our Polish major. We were able to improve enrollments thanks to offering long distance Advanced Polish Language to students at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. We are confident that we can further extend offering our Polish Intermediate Language Course to students residing on other campuses throughout the country.

Department of Slavic Languages and Literature
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Assessment Report of
MA/PhD Program in Slavic Languages and Literature
Spring 2013

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Graduate Curriculum Reform
During 2011-2012 and Fall 2012-2013, faculty and academic staff in the department
undertook a major graduate curricular reform. It was finalized, submitted to the College,
and approved in 2012-2013. The new curriculum goes into effect in Fall 2013, but some
of its provisions can be (and will be) applied to students who entered the program in
2010, 2011, and 2012.

The principal change in the new curriculum that pertains directly to our assessment
practices is the following: we introduced six "foundational courses" that cover major
periods in the history of Russian literature. (Only two of these courses existed in our
curriculum before.) Each semester one of the courses is offered, and all students write a
comprehensive exam at the end of the course. In three years of coursework, students have
the opportunity to take all six courses and write six exams. Students may be allowed to
skip a foundational course, but they remain responsible for the exam. This sequence of
six exams replaces our written preliminary examinations in the history of Russian
literature that, in our old curriculum, were offered as a set of written in-class and take-
home exams after students completed their coursework during their seventh or eighth
semester. We believe that this change to the curriculum improves student learning, gives
faculty a better opportunity to assess student progress on a semester-to-semester basis,
and leaves more time for students to work on their dissertation proposals during their
seventh semester.

Incoming Graduate Class
One student started PhD program in Fall 2012. This is below our departmental average,
which has been three students in the past years. We anticipate the incoming class to be at
the level of three students in most years in the future. In Fall 2013, three students will
start the program.

Russian Language Competency Exams
In compliance with our rigorous language proficiency requirements, all our PhD students
need to pass five Russian language competency exams by the end of their fifth semester
in residence; one-semester extensions are occasionally granted. Students need to pass
three out of five exams before being awarded an MA degree. All of our current students
have met these requirements.

Slavic Department Graduate Assessment

Second Slavic Language Reading Knowledge Exams
Our new graduate curriculum changed requirements in second Slavic language and
literature, and the department voted to apply these changes retroactively to our current
graduate students who are not doing their minor in Polish or Serbo-Croatian/BCS. A
preliminary examination in a second Slavic literature is no longer a PhD requirement.
One year of intensive Polish, Serbo-Croatian/BCS, or Czech instruction now prepares
students for a written reading knowledge examination which they take at the end of the
year. All of our current students have fulfilled the PhD requirement in second Slavic
language.

MA Degrees Conferred
Two students received MA degrees this year. One of them chose not to continue for the
PhD. In his exit questionnaire he expressed satisfaction with the program, but explained
that he prefers a career path outside academia.

PhD Preliminary Examinations
Two students took PhD preliminary examinations and passed them successfully in Spring
2013. These examinations consisted of written exams in the history of Russian literature
(in their old format) and a defense of a dissertation proposal.

Five students took one of the "foundational courses" (Eighteenth-Century Russian
Literature) that already existed in the catalogue prior to the graduate curricular reform,
and they were given the opportunity to take a comprehensive exam at the end. All five
passed the exam successfully, which releases them from the respective portion of our
"old" set of preliminary examinations.

PhD Degrees Conferred
Two PhD degrees were conferred in the past year (defenses in August 2012 and January
2013). One of these PhDs chose a career path outside academia as a translator; another
has been teaching in temporary positions in the past few years and continues to be on the
job market in search of a more permanent teaching position.

PhD Student Awards
During 2012-2013, our graduate students held the following non-departmental
fellowships: Dana-Allen Dissertation Fellowship (one student); FLAS academic-year
fellowship (two students); Chancellor's Dissertator Fellowship (one student); University
Dissertator Fellowship (one student); 2nd-year University Fellowship (one student).
During summer 2012, two of our dissertators held Mellon-Wisconsin Summer
Fellowships; and two pre-dissertators held summer FLAS Fellowships.

In 2012-2013, one of our graduate students received a PhD Capstone Teaching Award;
and another student was named an L&S Teaching Fellow for 2013.

Slavic Department Graduate Assessment

Job Placement of Advanced Dissertators
In a tough job market, several of our advanced dissertators have performed remarkably well. During 2012-2013, one held a one-year full-time visiting position at Wellesley College and has now secured a three-year full-time position at Oberlin College. Another advanced dissertator will hold a one-year full-time position at Swarthmore College in 2013-2014. Two other advanced dissertators have been teaching in part-time adjunct positions away from UW-Madison campus.

Satisfactory Progress Reports
We continue the practice of sending annual progress reports to pre-dissertators; these reports are written by the Director of Graduate Studies (Graduate Advisor) at the end of an academic year and are based on feedback received from faculty members in the department with whom students took classes and for whom they worked as Project Assistants. Dissertation advisors are responsible for communicating with their advisees regarding their progress.

Starting in 2013-2014, the department voted to introduce a practice of soliciting work status reports from dissertators that will be read by all graduate faculty members. These reports will be due by the start of the spring semester (third week of January).

L&S ASSESSMENT REPORT SURVEY 2012-2013

This survey may be completed online, by going to:
https://uwmadison.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_1KPP5NTbU2acZ6t

Introduction

Dear L&S chairs, directors, faculty, and academic program staff:

Annual assessment reports are due to the college by May 15, 2013.

By completing the survey that follows, you will be submitting your annual report on the assessment of student learning. These reports are needed so UW-Madison can comply with Regent and Federal regulations that require the university to systematically perform this work for all academic programs that lead to a credential (degree, major, and certificate). Your responses will be used to create the L&S Annual Report to the Provost on the Assessment of Student Learning. The college report to the Provost must contain a response for every L&S credential. As you know, this is a huge task - your help is essential.

The following links offer some background on Assessment of Student Learning, from the college assessment plan to some simple "how to" guides. (Some of the survey questions below also provide links to relevant resources.)

- L&S Assessment Plan: https://kb.wisc.edu/ls/page.php?id=25259
- L&S Department and Program Plans and Reports: https://kb.wisc.edu/ls/page.php?id=23837
- L&S Plan and Report content guidelines / templates: https://kb.wisc.edu/ls/page.php?id=25242
- Assessment Tips and Terms: https://kb.wisc.edu/ls/page.php?id=25287

This is the first time we are trying to gather this information by asking you to complete an online survey. Because reports are due May 15, 2013, the survey will be open during the Spring 2013 term. This survey has been designed to allow you to start, stop, and revise responses as long as you do so on the same computer where you started the survey, using the original link you were sent to begin the survey, and if you click "next" (which saves your information) before closing the survey. (If this gives you trouble, contact Elaine.) As an alternative to responding online, we will also make the survey available as an MS Word document that can be emailed to us.

If your program provides a formal report on assessment to a professional organization, accrediting agency, board of visitors, or other group, you may share that report as part of your response. Please contact Elaine Klein, the L&S Assistant Dean for Academic Planning (emklein@ls.wisc.edu) to discuss these options. (We will need responses for any programs that are not covered by these reports.)

Finally, we hope to share and use this information across the college, to encourage departments and programs to learn from each other, develop collaborations, and improve practices and learning. You may also notice that the information you provide here will be requested by other entities - the L&S Academic Planning Council, Curriculum Committee, and other groups in the college refer to assessment activities when discussing program reviews, requests for changes to courses and curricula, requests for departmental reconfiguration, calls for proposals for new projects, etc. Understanding how, and how well, our students are performing in our programs is essential to the work we do. The responses you provide will help us know if we're headed in the right direction.

Again, thank you for your response.

Gary Sandefur, Dean, College of Letters & Science
Elaine M. Klein, Assistant Dean for Academic Planning

Contact Information

Q2.1. If we have questions about the responses provided, it would be useful to be able to discuss them with you. Whom should we contact?

Q2.2. Address

Q2.3. e-mail contact

Q2.4. Telephone

Program Information Validation

Q3.1. List all of the academic programs this response addresses. Remember to include undergraduate and graduate levels, as well as certificate programs.   For your convenience, we provide here links to the lists of approved UW-Madison programs.

- Majors, options and degrees: http://registrar.wisc.edu/documents/85_Majors_Options_Degrees.pdf
- Certificates: http://registrar.wisc.edu/documents/85_Official_Certificates.pdf

Q3.2. Are the names and levels of the programs, as you understand them, consistent with the official lists?

- o   Yes
- o   No
- o   Academic program not listed
- o   Academic program should not be listed

Q3.3. If an academic program name needs to be updated, you may need to request a change to make the working name consistent with the official name. This will require approval by the department/program, the L&S Academic Planning Council, and the University Academic Planning Council. If you think you would like to change an academic program name, please contact your associate dean and the Assistant Dean for Academid Planning, Elaine M. Klein (emklein@ls.wisc.edu).

- Information on changing program names: https://kb.wisc.edu/ls/page.php?id=20052

 Should we let Elaine know you'll be contacting her about this?

- o   Yes
- o   No

Q3.4. If an academic program isn't listed, and if it should be formally recognized by the university, the department/program needs to seek approval through the College and University Academic Planning Councils. Please alert your department chair and associate dean that you wish to begin this process. If you have questions, contact the L&S Assistant Dean for Academic Planning, Elaine Klein (emklein@ls.wisc.edu).

- For Information on creating new academic programs: https://kb.wisc.edu/ls/page.php?id=20049

Should we let Elaine know you'll be contacting her about this?

o   Yes
o   No

Q3.5. If you have an academic program that should not be listed in these official documents (because the faculty have closed or suspended it), that action must be formally approved and implemented by the university. The department/program needs to seek approval through the L&S and University Academic Planning Councils.

Please alert your department chair and associate dean as soon as possible that you wish to begin this process. If you have questions, contact the L&S Assistant Dean for Academic Planning, Elaine Klein (emklein@ls.wisc.edu).

- For Information on suspending or discontinuing academic programs: https://kb.wisc.edu/ls/page.php?id=23316

Should we let Elaine know you'll be contacting her about this?

o   Yes
o   No

Assessment Plan
Q4.1. Please review the assessment plan on file for your program(s).

- L&S Department and Program Assessment Plans: https://kb.wisc.edu/ls/page.php?id=23837

Is it current?

o   Yes
o   No

Q4.2. If the plan on file is not current, and if you have a current plan, please send a copy to Elaine Klein (emklein@ls.wisc.edu).

If the plan on file is not current, and you need to update your plan, please provide a statement below explaining your plans to undertake that work. Your updated plan should be sent to the Dean (c/o Elaine Klein) by June 30, 2013. (Please contact Elaine if you need to discuss an alternative deadline.)

You may find the following documents useful as you undertake this work:

- L&S Plan and Report content guidelines / templates: https://kb.wisc.edu/ls/page.php?id=25242
- Assessment Tips and Terms: https://kb.wisc.edu/ls/page.php?id=25287
- L&S Department and Program Plans and Reports: https://kb.wisc.edu/ls/page.php?id=23837
- L&S Assessment Plan: https://kb.wisc.edu/ls/page.php?id=25259

Q4.3. Do you have other programs on which you can provide an assessment report? (Please understand that we must provide some report on every academic program and credential we offer.)

- o Yes
- o Nope, I'm done here.

Recent Assessment Activity

Q5.1.Assessment Purpose. Please describe the purpose of the assessment activity (e.g., to conduct a curricular or program review, to assess learning across a sequence of courses, to solve a problem with student performance, to honor MIU or other obligations, etc.)

Q5.2. Learning Outcomes or Goals Assessed. Referring to the list of student learning objectives/goals expressed in the program assessment plan, please identify the learning outcome(s) that were the focus of the assessment activity: what did you study about what you want students to know, value and/or do?

Q5.3. Assessment Strategy. Please describe your most recent assessment project. What did you to to try to better understand student learning across this program, in the context of the learning goal discussed in your response above?   Feel free to describe the tools, strategies, methods, and analysis used (e.g., graduating student surveys, standardized tests, grades on embedded questions on exams, alumni surveys, focus groups or interviews, evaluation of student work on papers, portfolios, capstone assignments, etc.)

Q5.4. Key Findings and Impact.   Please summarize the key findings (evidence/results) and how the department or program plans to use this information (e.g., no curricular changes, program enhancements, program redesign, etc.). This may include to whom results were reported to effect change (if needed),whether the results suggested other areas of inquiry,plans for continued attention to assessment (including "tweaking" the assessment plan),and/or deadlines for achieving milestones related to the above activities.

The Future

Q6.1. Please let us know what your next steps for assessing student learning will be.

Thank you!

Please email this document to emklein@ls.wisc.edu.
If you prefer, hard copies may be sent to Elaine Klein, Rm 307D South Hall

We'll be in touch if we have any additional questions.