

# **ASSESSMENT REPORT**

**College of Liberal Arts**

**Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures**

**Spanish/Spanish-International Trade, BA**

Two Bachelor of Arts academic degree programs comprise the Spanish Undergraduate Program at Auburn University: FLSP, Foreign Language Spanish & FLST, Foreign Language Spanish International Trade. Students seeking to earn a BA degree in Spanish complete all university core requirements, all CLA core requirements, and a minimum of 39 credit hours in required and elective FLSP coursework. Required courses for the FLSP (Spanish) major total 30 credit hours, including a one-hour Senior Capstone course. The remaining minimum 9 credit hours for the FLSP major are FLSP elective credit hours. Students who seek to earn a BA degree in FLST (Spanish-International Trade) complete all university core requirements and all CLA core requirements in addition to 30 credit hours within the College of Business (9 required courses and 1 elective course). FLST students will also complete 39 credit hours in required and elective FLSP coursework. Required courses for the FLST major constitute 33 credit hours, including a minimum of 6 credit hours in Business Spanish courses and a one-hour Senior Capstone course. The remaining minimum 6 credit hours for the FLST major are FLSP elective credit hours. Both FLSP and FLST students consult with the Undergraduate Spanish Program Officer in selecting elective credit hours that most closely align with their overall curriculum and professional goals.

## Student Learning Outcomes

### Specificity of Outcomes

Upon completion of the BA in Spanish (FLSP or FLST), students are expected to meet the following learning objectives as determined and agreed upon collectively by the Spanish faculty:

1. ORAL PROFICIENCY: Graduating seniors in Spanish will produce oral communication in all major time frames and verbal moods in connected discourse (paragraph-length utterances)
2. WRITTEN PROFICIENCY: Graduating seniors in Spanish will compose written communication in all major time frames and verbal moods in connected discourse (multi-paragraph-length texts);
3. CULTURAL FLUENCY: Graduating seniors in Spanish will be able to identify cultural icons of the Spanish-speaking and/or Latino/Hispanic world and to contextualize their relevance to the Spanish-speaking and/or Latino/Hispanic communities.

### Comprehensive Outcomes

The aforementioned Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) represent the culmination of all coursework related to the Spanish majors (FLSP/FLST). The majors share the common goals of preparing linguistically proficient and culturally/professionally competent global citizens; therefore, the FLSP foundational skills, the required cultural/business competency courses, and the diverse topical electives function together as an academic scaffold to buttress the individual learner’s evolution. All courses balance between building or reinforcing language skills and contextualizing that expression by means of cultural analysis (whether that cultural content manifest in a business, creative, linguistic, or historical context). Every course contributes to the primary objectives, albeit with differing distributions of SLO emphasis.

The Spanish program measures the aforementioned Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) in accordance with the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) Proficiency Guidelines, the leading national standard in evaluation rubrics for assessing language-learner proficiency. These standardized rubrics are nationally and internationally recognized by many major corporations and educational organizations and are also aligned with evaluations used to measure language proficiency of U.S. government agents. The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines include detailed descriptions –known as “Can-Do Statements” of what a speaker or writer must be able to produce and sustain with the language. The evaluation samples evidence what the speaker or writer can tell, discuss, interpret, examine, formulate, and argue in the target language to demonstrate the respective proficiency level. In summary, ACTFL rubrics allow an evaluator to identify the type of speech created and qualify the nature of that communication. Complete guidelines are available at: <http://www.actfl.org/publications/guidelines-and-manuals/actfl-proficiency-guidelines-2012>

### Communicating Student Learning Outcomes

The Spanish program shares its learning outcomes with all members of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures (FLL) faculty at the departmental general faculty meeting in August. The FLL Assessment Committee also holds an annual FLL faculty meeting during the fall semester to review program outcomes and generate strategies for refining the outcomes and successfully preparing students to meet expectations; this meeting includes a detailed overview of the assessment process (including a summary of the feedback report, to which all faculty are given electronic access) presented by the Undergraduate Program Directors of French, German, and Spanish in addition to roundtable discussion and small-group workshop tasks. Each language section also meets throughout the academic year to discuss learning outcomes, available support resources, teaching methodology, and overall student progress.

In the past year, the Spanish faculty specifically has taken steps to focus on those distinguishing factors, needs, and challenges of our FLSP/FLST majors in comparison to the numerous FLSP minors or non- major/minor students with the intention of providing our majors with targeted and specialized learning opportunities and experiences. This effort includes increasing transparency with respect to the SLOs and program-wide curriculum map. Professors in Spanish are encouraged to reference the program-wide SLOs in their syllabi, to devote some class time to discuss the SLOs with students enrolled in their courses (with special attention to those students identified as FLSP/FLST majors), and to revisit these SLOs at least three times throughout the semester (beginning, mid-term, end). A Spanish Undergraduate Committee advises the Spanish Undergraduate Program Officer in evaluating assessment samples as well as tracking alignment of course and program SLOs; as of Fall 2017, this committee will offer feedback to graduating seniors on their assessment submissions so as to give them a more global sense of their language and cultural fluency and competency. The Spanish Undergraduate Program Officer discusses SLOs with both prospective, current, and graduating students of the FLSP/FLST major(s), encouraging students to undergo ongoing self-assessment in addition to both formal (i.e. course grades, study abroad or internships) and informal (ungraded communication samples, impromptu learning moments, extracurricular events) outcome-oriented evaluations. Always students and faculty must keep present that language proficiency and cultural literacy are in constant development, both in the classroom setting and in the greater local and global community. Ultimately our goal is not only to improve our program SLOs and to prepare our students to satisfy these objectives satisfactorily but also to communicate the reality of lifelong education to our majors.

## Curriculum Map

**Spanish, BA (FLSP): Student Learning Outcomes**

Students graduating with a BA in Spanish (FLSP) will achieve the following expectations:

1. ORAL PROFICIENCY: Graduating seniors in Spanish will produce oral communication in all major time frames and verbal moods in connected discourse (paragraph-length utterances);
2. WRITTEN PROFICIENCY: Graduating seniors in Spanish will compose written communication in all major time frames and verbal moods in connected discourse (multi-paragraph-length texts);
3. CULTURAL FLUENCY: Graduating seniors in Spanish will be able to identify cultural icons of the Spanish-speaking and/or Latino/Hispanic world and to contextualize their relevance to the Spanish-speaking and/or Latino/Hispanic communities.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Required Coursework | Outcome 1 (Cultural Fluency) | Outcome 2 (Oral Proficiency) | Outcome 3 (Written Proficiency) |
| FLSP 2010 (Intermediate Spanish I) | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| FLSP 2020 (Intermediate Spanish II) | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| FLSP 3010 (Phonetics) | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| FLSP 3060 (Communicative Skills I) | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| FLSP 3070 (Communicative Skills II) | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| FLSP 3080 (Intro. to Cultural Analysis) | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| FLSP 3100 (Intro. to Hispanic Literature) | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| FLSP Civilization: either FLSP 3110 (Cultures of Spain), or FLSP 3210 (Cultures of Spanish America), or FLSP 3220 (U.S. Latino Culture) | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| FLSP 4010 (Oral Proficiency in Spanish) | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| FLFR 4980 (Capstone)  | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| + 9 hours of elective coursework on the 3000- or 4000- level | 2/3 | 2/3 | 2/3 |

1= Introduced

2=Reinforced

3=Emphasized

**Spanish-International Trade, BA (FLST): Student Learning Outcomes**

Students graduating with a BA in Spanish (FLST) will achieve the following expectations:

1. ORAL PROFICIENCY: Graduating seniors in Spanish will produce oral communication in all major time frames and verbal moods in connected discourse (paragraph-length utterances);
2. WRITTEN PROFICIENCY: Graduating seniors in Spanish will compose written communication in all major time frames and verbal moods in connected discourse (multi-paragraph-length texts);
3. CULTURAL FLUENCY: Graduating seniors in Spanish will be able to identify cultural icons of the Spanish-speaking and/or Latino/Hispanic world and to contextualize their relevance to the Spanish-speaking and/or Latino/Hispanic communities.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Required Coursework | Outcome 1 (Cultural Fluency) | Outcome 2 (Oral Proficiency) | Outcome 3 (Written Proficiency) |
| FLSP 2010 (Intermediate Spanish I) | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| FLSP 2020 (Intermediate Spanish II) | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| FLSP 3010 (Phonetics) | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| FLSP 3060 (Communicative Skills I) | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| FLSP 3070 (Communicative Skills II) | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| FLSP 3080 (Intro. to Cultural Analysis) | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| FLSP 3100 (Intro. to Hispanic Literature) | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| FLSP 4310 Business Spanish I | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| FLSP 4330 Topics in the Hispanic Commercial World | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| FLSP 3310 Spanish Translation and Interpretation or FLSP 4010 (Oral Proficiency in Spanish) | 3 | 3 | 3/2 |
| FLFR 4980 (Capstone)  | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| + 6 hours of elective coursework on the 3000- or 4000- level | 2/3 | 2/3 | 2/3 |

1= Introduced

2=Reinforced

3=Emphasized

## Measurement

### Outcome-Measure Alignment

The following summary outlines how outcomes are measured in alignment with the courses presented in the above curriculum maps as well as the senior Capstone course.

The Spanish faculty takes seriously its responsibility to assess our common Student Learning Outcomes throughout the curriculum and to match individual course objectives in close alignment with the three global SLOs that govern our program. Faculty reference these SLOs on individual course syllabi, and all course assignments directly funnel into the three major SLOs that center on productively-communicative language proficiency and Hispanic cultural fluency; however, the content and scope of any specific course always will determine the particular design of an assignment. In short, the destination will be common to all FLSP courses, whereas the instructional path to that goal is unique to the course.

In order to measure students’ ability to produce oral communication in all major time frames and verbal moods in connected discourse (paragraph-length utterances), assignments prompt a variety of speaking opportunities, such as interviews, situational role-play, in-class presentations, video conferencing, conversational games, roundtable discussions, moderated debates, news reports, dramatic skits and creative or professional monologues and dialogues.

In order to measure students’ ability to compose written communication in all major time frames and verbal moods in connected discourse (multi-paragraph-length texts), assignments foster the production of a variety of compositional styles and genres, such as correspondence, research papers, creative literature (poems, short stories, short scripts, and plays), thematic essays, critical reviews, news articles, opinion editorials, and blogs.

In order to measure students’ ability to identify cultural icons of the Spanish-speaking and/or Latino/Hispanic world and to contextualize their relevance to the Spanish-speaking and/or Latino/Hispanic communities, assignments encourage cross-cultural comparative analysis, reflective journaling, summary reports of content readings, response analysis of an authentic cultural relic, and traditional quizzes and exams with both closed-ended (multiple choice, true/false, matching) and open-ended prompts that allow exploration of a significant cultural practice, phenomenon, or protocol.

During a students’ final semester prior to graduation, s/he will enroll in a 1-credit hour senior Capstone course, for which s/he will receive a grade of either “S” (satisfactory) or “U” (unsatisfactory). The focus of this all-encompassing course is reflective, both for faculty and students: to gain a bird’s-eye view of where the student stands developmentally with respect to the SLOs and to assess strategies for continued improvement both to the program and for the graduating senior’s continued post-degree progress. Whereas students are evaluated according to numeric rubrics, the final grade represents only the students’ completion of course requirements (attendance at advising sessions and group discussion meetings, submission of materials); this “S/U” grading system alleviates the pressure to compete for a letter grade while also promoting process-oriented awareness, for once the student graduates, it is expected that s/he will enter into future academic and professional situations with a keen attention to self-monitoring and continued maturation as a speaker, writer, and cultural observer.

The Capstone course required the following assignments in Fall 2016-Spring 2017: a) an exit interview with the Spanish Undergraduate Director; b) an extemporaneous speech recording in which the student had the option to respond to one of three conflictive situations and was asked to analyze the dilemma from multiple perspectives and proffer a peaceable resolution to each party; students were asked to listen to their submission and provide a detailed justification for the self-evaluation of speaking factors such as pronunciation, fluidity, length of discourse, complexity of the argument/resolution, grammatical accuracy, grammatical variety, syntax, appropriateness and variety of vocabulary; c) a redacted sample of extended writing accompanied by a written reflective statement on the process (the instructions guided the authors to report, to analyze, and to hypothesize in the self-assessment); d) attendance at a cultural event with a follow-up live oral report; e) a roundtable discussion centered on an authentic Spanish-language reading deemed “relevant and meaningful” to the student’s formation as a Spanish-speaker; f) a choice of a professional-development activity [Options included 1. a follow-up reflective summary (oral or written) in Spanish following a meeting with the AU Career Center about job/internship placement or post-degree academic programs; 2. submitting a resume and cover letter in Spanish; 3. giving a professional “elevator pitch” in Spanish. Let it be noted that students had the option to provide their reflective analyses in either English or Spanish, and the overwhelming majority chose to complete these tasks in the target language of Spanish.

The following graphic identifies how each component measures one, two, or all three Student Learning Outcome(s):

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Capstone Assignment/Task | Outcome 1 (Cultural Fluency) | Outcome 2 (Oral Proficiency) | Outcome 3 (Written Proficiency) |
| Exit Interview  | 3 | 3 | 1 |
| Extemporaneous Spanish Speech Recording with Reflective Analysis | 1/2 | 3 | 1 |
| Redacted Spanish Writing Sample with Reflective Analysis  | 1/2 | 1 | 3 |
| Cultural Event with Live Oral Report | 3 | 3 | 1 |
| Roundtable Discussion on Formative Spanish-Language Text  | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Professional-Development Activity | 3 | 2/3 | 2/3 |
| 1=(minimal or no) correlating measure 2=(moderate) correlating measure 3= principal measure  |  |  |  |

## Measurement

### Outcome-Measure Alignment

All of the measures mentioned above are direct measures of student learning.

### Data Collection

In the past, it has neither been feasible nor practical to collect data from individual courses throughout the FLSP/FLST curriculum; however, the Spanish section has discussed the possibility of implementing an e-portfolio component to our undergraduate program. It would make sense to link this to the Capstone course, and we have consulted with the e-Portfolio Project housed within the Office of University Writing toward that end. For now, the Capstone course is our only source of data collection for current assessment purposes. This data is collected by the Capstone faculty director. With the exception of live events (such as the roundtable reading discussion or the cultural event), the Capstone submissions are made available to the Undergraduate Program Committee for the purpose of conducting yearly assessment; all Spanish faculty, through regular meetings and workshops, contribute either directly or indirectly to the genesis of Capstone assessment materials. Upon review of the year’s data, the Spanish Undergraduate Director summarizes results and identifies for the faculty data areas requiring improvement as well as those data areas to be considered for elimination, revision, or distinguished recognition.

In consultation with colleagues in French and German, the Spanish section has adopted rubrics for evaluating each SLO. For assessing oral and

written communication, our rubric is mapped onto the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, whereby 1 = Intermediate Low and Mid; 2 = Intermediate

High; 3 = Advanced Low and Mid; and 4 = Advanced High and Superior. Whereas ACTFL delineates comprehensive guidelines for oral and

written proficiency, currently there exists no such standardized method for evaluating cultural fluency, despite the growing emphasis being placed within the College of Liberal Arts on students’ professional development and authentic humanistic experience. Thanks to our inter-departmental cooperation and collaboration, FLL faculty over the past semesters have participated in ongoing discussions, meetings, and workshops relating to

assessment measures, “Best Practices,” all in an effort to improve our students’ linguistic and cultural competence as well as our own teaching

methods. Students’ cultural literacy is evaluated based on rubrics and a scale ranging from 1 to 4 (indicating: does not meet expectations, almost

meets expectations, meets expectations, and exceeds expectations), categories inspired by the ACTFL proficiency guidelines for oral and

written communication.

Student , **C**ULTURE/**B**USINESS: Rubrics for Evaluation

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Score | Exceeds expectations | Meets expectations | Almost Meets expectations | Does not meet expectations |
|  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Question → | C 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | C 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | C 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | C 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Focus ↓ | B 1 2 3 4 5 | B 1 2 3 4 5 | B 1 2 3 4 5 | B 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Recall and Identification | Accurate identification of event, person, date, or business fact | Recognizes name but lacks specificity | Recall of name | No recognition or vague recall |
| Analysis of meaning and context | Accurate description of details and cultural/business context | Description of contexts lacks detail with some incoherence | Simple description, little coherence | Vague description (after interlocutor assisted with recall) |
| Interpretation of relevance | Precise interpretation of historical-cultural/business relevance for society today | Adequate explanation of relevance | Some, minimal explanation of relevance | Inadequate explanation(after interlocutor assisted with recall) |

Student , ORAL PRODUCTION: Rubrics for Evaluation

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Intermediate Low | Intermediate Mid | Intermediate High | Advanced Low | Advanced Mid | Avanced-High/Superior |
| SCORE | **1** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **3** | **4** |
| Language/Vocabulary | Survival needs (food, making simple purchases) | Express personal meaning; little circumlocution | Daily life and social situations, but limited when leaving the personal realm | Variety of communi- cative tasks; circumlocution and rephrasing | Large number of communicative tasks; circumlocu- tion/ rephrasing | Abundant vocab on personal, inter/ national matters |
| Time frame | Present time | Present timeDifficulty manipulating time | Narrate and describe in all majorß time frames most of the time | Narrate and describe in all major time frames; some control of aspect | Full accounts in all major time frames; good control of aspect | Explain in detail and narrate fully and accurately in all time frames |
| Topics/ Structure | Concrete topics; *limited* number of predictable topics social situations (self/family/ daily activities)Reactive, struggle to answer direct questions | Handle variety of communicative tasks in straightforward social situationsReactive, but capable of asking variety of questions to obtain information, strings of sentences | Ease and confidence in routine tasks and social situations related to work, school, and areas of competenceSome paragraph-length discourse | Personal topics as well as topics related to employment, current events; and matters of community interestLinked sentences, connected discourse, paragraph lengthHandle linguistic chall- enge by complications | Variety of topics rela- ted to work, school, leisure; and events of current/ public rele- vance. Narration combined and inter- woven in connected paragraph length dis- course. Handle linguistic challenge by complications | Variety of topics, structured arguments to support opinion, construction of hypothesesSome topics dis- cussed abstractly but comfortable to discuss concretely |
| Pronunciation/ Comprehensi- bility | Pronunciation and | Pauses and reformula- | Generally understood | Understood by native | Readily under-stood | Readily |
| syntax influenced | tions to find adequate | by native speakers un- | speakers unaccu- | by native speakers | understood by |
| heavily by first | vocabulary and syntax | accustomed to non- | stomed to non- | unaccu-stomed to | native speakers |
| languageGenerally under- stood by sympathe- tic interlocutors when accustomed to | Generally understood by sympathetic inter- locutors accustomed to non-natives | natives, althoughinterference from another language occurs (false cognates, literal translations) | natives, with somerepetition and restate- mentCertain grammatical roughness | non-nativesSubstantial flow of speech | unaccustomed tonon-nativesGreat fluency and ease of speech |

Student , WRITTEN PRODUCTION: Rubrics for Evaluation:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| SCORE | Intermediate Low | Intermediate Mid | Intermediate High | Advanced Low | Advanced Mid | Advanced High/Superior |
| SCORE | **1** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **3** | **4** |
| Vocabulary | Basic, elementary needs | Basic, personal and common needs | Basic, personal, social (work/ school) needs | Meets basic work and academic needs | Meets a range of work/academic needs | Wide general vocabulary for in/ formal correspondence |
| Time frame | Present time | Present time, contains reference to other time frames | Use different time frames, but inconsi- stent, with appropriate time markers | Describes in major time frames with control of aspect | Describes with detail in all major time frames, good control of aspect | Narrates and describes in major time frames, solid control of aspect |
| Function, Structure | Statements, quest- ions about familiar materialSimple, conversational type sentences, repetitiveTopics tied to personal information | Control of basic sentence struct- ure, personalSentences loosely strung togetherResembles oral discoursePersonal topics, daily routines, common events | Compositions and simple summariesNarrations often of paragraph length, correspond to spoken languageDescriptions, narrations about school experience | Compositions, brief summariesParagraph length and structurePatterns of oral dis- course, resembles writing style of first languageFamiliar topics | Cohesive, several paragraphs in lengthcontrol of frequent target language syntactic structure (and vocabulary)Topics of general interest | Significant precision and details in sum- maries and reportsTopics relating to particular interests and special interests(Inconsistent) con- struction of hypotheses |
| Comprehen- sibility | Understood by natives used to writing of non- natives (with some effort) | Understood easily by natives used towriting of non-natives | Comprehensible to natives not used to the writing of non-natives | Understood by natives not accustomed to writing of non-natives (with some effort) | Understood readily by natives not used to the writing of non- natives | Some linguistic limitations may distract native reader from message |

## Results

### Reporting Results

Please find below the assessment results for the **Academic Year 2016-17**. These results encompass both FLSP and FLST and include data from Fall 2016 and Spring 2017. The reported score represents the average of all faculty input received.

There were 30 students who completed the major during this academic year; two-thirds (20) of these students followed the FLSP track, while a significant third (10) opted for the FLST track. The downward trend continues with respect to the number of students declaring majors (this in comparison with the statistical upward trend in FLSP minors) with a decline of 17 FLSP/FLST majors from last year’s report. Nevertheless, it is of encouraging significance that the overwhelming majority (24 out of 30) were classified as double-majors with second majors in a wide array of university disciplines; these statistics showcase the diverse appeal of the FLSP/FLST majors.

**AY 2016-2017**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| STUDENT | OUTCOME 1 (culture) | OUTCOME 2 (oral) | OUTCOME (written) |
| Student #1 | 3 | 3.5 | 3 |
| Student #2 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Student #3 | 3.5 | 3 | 3 |
| Student #4 | 4 | 3 | 3.75 |
| Student #5 | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| Student #6 | 4 | 3.25 | 3.25 |
| Student #7 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Student #8 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 3 |
| Student #9 | 3.25 | 3.75 | 4 |
| Student #10 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Student #11 | 2.75 | 3.5 | 3.75 |
| Student #12 | 2 | 2.5 | 3 |
| Student #13 | 4 | 3 | 4 |
| Student #14 | 4 | 3 | 3.5 |
| Student #15 | 4 | 3.25 | 3.75 |
| Student #16 | 3.5 | 4 | 4 |
| Student #17 | 3 | 2.75 | 3 |
| Student #18 | 3 | 3 | 3.5 |
| Student #19 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 3.25 |
| Student #20 | 4 | 3.5 | 4 |
| Student #21 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Student #22 | 2 | 3 | 3.5 |
| Student #23 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Student #24 | 3 | 3 | 3.25 |
| Student #25 | 4 | 3.5 | 3 |
| Student #26 | 3 | 2.75 | 3 |
| Student #27 | 2.5 | 3 | 3 |
| Student #28 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Student #29 | 4 | 3.25 | 3.75 |
| Student #30 | 3.5 | 3 | 3.5 |

A faithful historical analysis is problematic in this report for four reasons: a) this group includes a mix of students who started degree work under the old undergraduate curriculum models yet completed at least one semester of senior=level coursework under the significantly revised model; b) there was a change in administrative responsibility within the Spanish section; whereas the previous professor charged with authoring the assessment report had more than a decade of experience with collecting and evaluating the data, now this task falls within the responsibilities of the Undergraduate Spanish Program Director, and naturally, with transition often comes a steep learning curve for the new administrator; c) due to retirements and abroad duties, there was only partial data available for AY 2015-2016; d) the implementation of a new undergraduate FLSP curriculum motivated reconsideration of the effectiveness of previous testing tools (i.e. the culture quiz, the unprompted speech sample, the reading recording, the unrevised writing sample, etc.) and an overhaul of some of the ineffective or outdated methods more directly aligns with the shared push toward more communicative-based language philosophy in addition to a more broadly-definition of what constitutes “culture”. Examining the results of the coming 2-3 years will allow for a more accurate assessment of our new curriculum model, and it might also be worthwhile to consider qualitative shifts from earlier years.

### Interpreting Results

Based on the above results, we observe that on the whole our students are meeting expectations in a satisfactory manner; the proficiency is somewhat irregular, but second-language acquisition research informs us that it is normal for learners to preference one skill or ability or fluency over another. Perhaps the evaluators should be constrained to a 1-2-3-4 rating rather than permitting decimal (quarter, half, three-quarter) scores. It is interesting to examine the discrepancy sometimes between cultural fluency and written/oral communication. The average scores distributing as follows: 80% Cultural, 82% Oral, 88% Written. Certainly these scores are satisfactory, in that our graduating seniors as a whole are performing at what one could consider a “B” or above-average level. However, the percentage for culture is lower than one might expect, given the open-ended nature of the cultural data evaluated. One wonders if this is due to evaluator subjectivity/bias or the lack of a nationally standardized rubric or simply to the fact that the very definition of a “cultural icon” itself is a slippery and somewhat ambiguous entity. Nevertheless, the results do appear much more encouraging than the previous 50-question cultural quiz, which yielded a discouraging 68% result; that is to say that students are able to express a more fluid cultural awareness through qualitative measures rather than a finite trivia quiz that may or may not correlate to their entire course curriculum and is constantly in flux. Moreover, the students in this group had not all benefitted from the FLSP 3080 Intro to Cultural Analysis course, nor the breadth of topical courses now available in the revised curriculum. The oral samples do as a whole exhibit improvement from the last assessment report (76% vs. 82%), and this is a significant jump. Almost all students who participated in this group had completed the new required FLSP 4010 Oral Proficiency course; these results indicate the introduction of that course into the curriculum positively influenced students’ ability in oral communication. The written score is very encouraging in that the last report indicated an overall score of 78%, whereas this year’s group scored in the 88th percentile. It remains to be seen if these results indicate more serious students (fewer majors but more dedicated?), curriculum changes, and/or evaluator fluctuation. There promises to be more consistency with respect to data collection and evaluation methods now that our faculty and administration is experiencing less flux. The evaluators look forward to interpreting the results of forthcoming years in comparison to those of this year, our initial with the new curriculum.

### Communicating Results

Once our assessment results are reported to the Office of Academic Assessment, a copy of our program assessment report is circulated electronically to other members of the Spanish faculty; members are asked for feedback and to identify main talking points for a section meeting in the fall as well as to offer suggestions for developing workshops or “brown bag” discussions related to the results. The Undergraduate Spanish Program Officer convokes a meeting of the Spanish Undergraduate Assessment Committee to discuss responsibilities and assignments for all committee members as well as to receive input from members regarding the Spanish Capstone course. The assessment report is circulated again and discussed by Spanish program faculty in the following fall semester. Thus, this report will be shared, distributed and discussed during the Fall 2017 semester. There are three meetings: the first consists of the Spanish Undergraduate Assessment Committee, the second occurs during a program-specific faculty meeting and the third during a special meeting of the FLL Department Assessment Committee to which all departmental faculty are invited. Last year – during fall 2016 – two professors provided a PowerPoint presentation about the new assessment measures focusing specifically on the curriculum map and Student Learning Outcomes, two areas that were singled out as needing improvement in the feedback received from the previous year. After this presentation, there were break-out groups for each program where faculty discussed assessment results, as well as program-specific goals related to the SLOs and our curriculum.

## Use of Results

### Purposeful Reflection and Action Plan

The Spanish faculty invests great thought, lively discussion, and concerted efforts into designing reasonable, professionally current, and sustainable action plans for improving student learning. Over the past two years, the faculty has harvested the fruits of these labors by way of implementing a revamped undergraduate curriculum model, one with greater emphasis on authentic language communication and responsible cultural intelligence. Prior to this curriculum overall, the Spanish section had focused on the two productive abilities of written and oral expression, making a concerted effort in response to student satisfaction surveys to provide numerous and diverse speaking and writing classroom opportunities. We have devoted much more attention to the PROCESS of language acquisition, which assuages student anxiety about producing perfect samples (an unrealistic goal); what we have found is that educating students about second-language acquisition actually leads to greater student satisfaction while also increasing the likelihood of classroom activities and program design that foster greater proficiency (albeit the margin of competency is admittedly slight). We acknowledged the need for increasing cultural awareness; however, the old testing method was deemed too narrow in focus and did not align with new philosophy that broadens the definition of “culture” so as to include traditional fine arts, contemporary professional protocol, and popular culture, incorporating marginal or fringe communities as equally relevant for observation and awareness as mainstream ones. These discussions are ongoing, and although there are differences of opinion amidst the faculty, there is no doubt that we strive to graduate FLSP/FLST seniors who are linguistically competent no matter their complimentary fields and culturally responsible and sensitive to the contributions of the complex mosaic that makes up the Hispanic world. In the past academic year, we met for regular meetings and “Best Practices” workshops focusing on the new foundational Communicative Skills courses (FLSP 3060 & FLSP 3070) in addition to the introductory Cultural Analysis and Hispanic Literature courses (FLSP 3080 and 3100). We looked at the curriculum map starting at the Intermediate Spanish levels and going to the senior-level Oral Proficiency and seminar courses in Business, Culture, Linguistics, and Literature with the goal of identifying exactly how one flows into the other. We pinpointed a need to smooth the transitions from one level to the next and to clarify resources and assignment types that best facilitate student progression. As we become more familiar with current disciplinary standards alongside the resources available through the supporting AU Offices (Academic Assessment, University Writing, Biggio Center for the Enhancement of Teaching & Learning, Career Center, etc.), we also engage in consistent dialogue with our fellow FLL colleagues in other language areas. This interconnectedness is invaluable to improvement.

Experience has shown that the Spanish faculty succeeds most when focus is directed toward a reduced number of elements at a time. There are three key areas in need of our immediate attention:

1. The “passive” skills of reading comprehension and listening are two major language skills that have not received as much of our attention in the past few years. While continuing to improve written and oral communication, we must also incorporate strategic methods for bolstering these secondary skills.
2. More and more our students push for opportunities to put into “real” practice the skills they have honed and the knowledge they have acquired in the classroom. While the abroad programs continue to appeal as the most popular method, so too are professional internships, extracurricular cultural events, and service projects desirable. The Spanish Capstone course introduced more cultural and professional activities this past semester to fair success. Already we regularly organize and host a multitude of cultural events on campus, whereas business and service projects have been limited to the service-learning and business courses. We will continue to refine the cultural component of the Spanish Capstone course so as to include more professional development and opportunities for interacting with the Hispanic community. So too will we develop professional workshops open to all Spanish-language students on topics related to career preparation and civic engagement.
3. We must improve our own data collection and measurements. This could necessitate a revision of the wording in our SLOs. This definitely will include more consultation with the resources available through the Office of Assessment and even more collaboration our FLL colleagues in French and German.