

Unit Plan for Assessing and Improving Student Learning in Degree Programs

Unit: East Asian Languages and Cultures

Unit Head approval: Karen Kelsky

Date: May 06, 2008

SECTION 1: PAST ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Brief description of changes or improvements made in your unit as the result of assessment results since 2000.

- A plan for the assessment of students' proficiency in East Asian languages is underway. Thanks to the mini-grant of \$1000.00 from CTE, we will have Oral Proficiency Interviews performed by an external examiner for a random sample of senior EALC majors in spring 2009.
- In Fall 2007, David Goodman, Director of the Graduate Studies was charged with developing a comprehensive annual review process for graduate students. Starting this spring, all graduate students have undergone this process.

SECTION 2: REVISED ASSESSMENT PLAN

(a) PROCESS:

In Fall 2007, Misumi Sadler was appointed by Karen Kelsky, Head, to attend the workshops provided by the Center for Teaching Excellence (hereafter referred to as CTE). A working draft of the plan was developed by Misumi Sadler, with assistance provided by David Goodman, Director of the Graduate Studies and CTE in spring 2008.

(b) DESIRED LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Undergraduate Program

The undergraduate program is designed to ensure that our students will develop the following general competencies:

Outcome 1: A firm competence in an East Asian language—ability to communicate effectively in the language of the target country in a linguistically and culturally appropriate manner

Outcome 2: A solid familiarity with East Asian cultures through multiple disciplines

Outcome 3: A more advanced knowledge of the region including research and writing in a seminar format

Graduate Program

The graduate program in East Asian Languages and Cultures at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign reflects the Department's conviction that an understanding of East Asia must build on a broad and deep proficiency in both the languages of the region and in the theoretical

and methodological approaches that inform advanced teaching and research of its cultures. Both the Master's and Doctoral programs embody that conviction in concept and design. Graduate students in the Department are encouraged to develop breadth of vision in their approach to East Asia, spanning historical periods, academic disciplines, and geographical boundaries, testing theories and methods and critically assessing their usefulness in understanding the cultures of East Asia. Graduate students in EALC are expected to develop the following general competencies:

Outcome 1: A high degree of proficiency in the languages of East Asia

Outcome 2: A deep understanding of its cultures

Outcome 3: The ability to think critically

More specifically, the successful MA student of EALC should:

- become proficient in one East Asian language
- take the Proseminar
- fulfill the distribution requirements—a minimum of two 400- or 500-level in a (1) Second Field (at least one unit of work outside the major field of interest), (2) Second Culture (at least one unit of work in an East Asian culture other than the major areas of interest, and (3) Second Period (at least one unit each in the modern and pre-modern period), and pass an eight-hour, three-part MA exam before proceeding to the PhD for most students

In addition to all requirements stated above, the successful PhD student of EALC should:

- become proficient in two East Asian languages
- pass a written and oral preliminary examination in the major and two minor fields (after completion of coursework)
- successfully present a dissertation proposal (often as part of the preliminary exam)
- complete the dissertation
- defend the dissertation

(c) MEASURES AND METHODS USED TO MEASURE OUTCOMES:

Undergraduate Program

The outcomes listed above will be assessed in the following methods:

- Testing oral proficiency using ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview and/or nationally and internationally recognized examinations of East Asian language proficiency
- Successful completion of appropriate/required language courses
- Successful completion of appropriate/required courses in the culture of the target country and on East Asian culture generally
- Successful completion of a senior project demonstrating ability to integrate learning in discrete courses around one or two major issues approached from a single disciplinary perspective.
- Tracking course grades to see indications of students' competence
- Tracking ICES responses to see general level of students' perceptions in terms of subject-matter knowledge, understanding of cultures, the development of communicative skills and critical thinking skills.

- Student focus groups—monitoring of students’ work, study abroad, key course GPAs and ICES scores
- Exit survey or interviews of graduating seniors
- Survey of program alumni—assessing program effectiveness
- Survey of alumni employers

Graduate Program

In addition to the measures and methods used for undergraduate programs, the outcomes for graduate students will be assessed in the following ways:

- Annual Review: Based on a model from Michigan State University, an annual progress report was developed by David Goodman, Director of the Graduate Studies in EALC and implemented in spring 2008 in order to improve student advising, better track student progress, accelerate advancement toward the Ph.D., and detect and correct potential problems early. The procedure is as follows: i) students complete most sections of the form and submit it to their adviser for his/her comments; ii) at the same time, students make an appointment to meet with their adviser to discuss their annual progress and future plans; iii) advisers add their comments to the form and meet with their student to discuss the student's progress; iv) advisers and students print out and sign 3 copies of the form, one for the student, one for the adviser, and one for the student's permanent file; and v) the student submits the signed third copy to the DGS for filing.
- In-class exams and/or papers to assess students’ critical thinking skills, analytical abilities, command of the subject matter, and command of the target language
- Comprehensive examination upon completion of coursework
- A doctoral thesis including successful oral defenses (i.e., proposal and the final completed thesis)

SECTION 3: PLANS FOR USING RESULTS

(a) PLANS: Brief description of plans to use assessment results for program improvement.

A faculty committee (e.g., curriculum committee) will regularly evaluate a random sample of students’ papers, examinations, and grades, as well as the results from the senior survey, Oral Proficiency Interview results, alumni surveys, ICES scores and other indices of students’ achievement and satisfaction that may come to light. The committee will report the results and provide suggestions for improvement to the head.

(b) TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION:

2008-2009

- Establish departmental Assessment Committee. The committee will consult with faculty, graduate students and undergraduate students, and revise the assessment plan accordingly. The final version of the plan will be approved by the faculty of the department in spring 2009.
- Annual Review for graduate students
- Implementation of ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interviews

2009-2010

- Annual Review for graduate students
- Develop process for monitoring students' grades in key courses
- Develop process for monitoring ICES scores in key courses
- Identify key courses

2010-2011

- Annual Review for graduate students
- Review ICES questionnaire core of the department
- Identify student focus groups (graduate and undergraduate)

2011-2012

- Annual Review for graduate students
- Tabulate and interpret students' grade data in key courses
- Implement new ICES core

2012-2013

- Annual Review for graduate students
- Meet with the first student focus group
- Tabulate and interpret ICES scores in key courses