



DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Department Writing Plan Version 2.0

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Department of Foreign Languages Writing Across the Curriculum Plan for Spanish Education and Spanish BA Majors Rollout Fall 2019

Writing in the Discipline of Foreign Languages

Writing in the field of foreign languages draws on research and best practices in both English and ESL composition studies. When students engage in the complex processes of writing, not only do they improve in their ability to write but, simultaneously deepen their knowledge and understanding of the subject matter – in this case the foreign language itself. The current curriculum of the Department of Foreign Languages naturally lends itself to both the writing-to-learn and writing-to-communicate activities and assignments that form Writing Across the Curriculum. In the context of the foreign language courses, writing-to-learn activities are blended with writing-to-communicate assignments in order to facilitate a discourse community in the target language (Spanish) through the use of that language as a common medium of communication. In other words, the act of writing operates as a tool for learning, aiding students in both acquiring knowledge and in negotiating meaning in order to communicate with their classmates and professor.

Development of the Writing Across the Curriculum Plan

The Department of Foreign Languages has had in place for many years a writing-enriched curriculum for its two major programs in Spanish. In summer of 2017, the department began to work on this Departmental Writing Plan (DWP), which will guide effective and continuous assessment of student writing and use the assessments to evaluate and improve writing instruction.

In creating this DWP based on an established writing-enriched curriculum, Dr. Marveta Ryan-Sams, Associate Professor of Spanish, served as liaison between the IUP Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) Director and the Department of Foreign Languages. In addition, the Departmental Assessment Committee (DAC) played a significant role in incorporating into the DWP already developed and long-used performance criteria, and in establishing baseline assessments. Dr. Ryan-Sams also consulted with department colleague, Dr. Eileen Glisan, who for many years has taken the responsibility of assuring that the B.S. in Spanish Education K-12 met and exceeded the standards for accreditation and recognition by professional organizations in this field. To draft this Department Writing Plan (DWP), Dr. Ryan-Sams used a template borrowed from the University of Minnesota¹ and adapted by IUP WAC Director, Dr. Bryna Siegel Finer, to thoroughly investigate where and how writing was already being taught in the curriculum for Spanish majors, and how writing could be better assessed and taught.

¹ University of Minnesota Writing Enriched Curriculum. 2013. <http://wec.umn.edu/Writingplans.html>

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In 2017-2018, Foreign Languages WAC Director, Dr. Ryan-Sams, developed the DWP in conjunction with the department chairperson and members of the DAC. During this initial phase, Dr. Ryan-Sams reviewed department syllabi, collected writing assignments and activities, and consulted with the IUP WAC director.

The Department of Foreign Languages has two major programs: the BS in Spanish Education and the BA in Spanish. In September 2018, the department faculty unanimously approved its student learning outcomes assessment plan. A key component of the plan is the use of aggregate data for multiple years of Key Assessments in all Spanish courses; key assessment data have been collected for years as part of the Spanish Education program. Aggregate, multi-year data collection ensures a larger sample size while also protecting instructor anonymity. Similarly, the DWP uses aggregate data to assess student writing performance.

Expected Student Writing Skills and Abilities

The Department of Foreign Languages is committed to helping students improve their writing skills in the target language toward the goal of being able to communicate as professionals in the field do. Department faculty are committed to introducing, emphasizing, and reinforcing these skills and abilities throughout the curriculum. The faculty do so through writing assignments and activities designed to develop writing proficiency at every level. Examples of those assignments and activities appear in the Writing Outcomes Curriculum Map, which is part of this document. Also, many department faculty members have participated (and continue to participate) in professional development training in writing-to-learn pedagogy² through writing workshops with the IUP WAC director and participation in Liberal Studies writing workshops. Some faculty members engage in research on how to better apply the principles of Writing Across the Curriculum into course design.

The Department of Foreign Languages' two majors, the BA—Spanish and the BS in Education—Spanish Education K-12, are focused on developing writing proficiency in the target language so that, by the time that students graduate, they can communicate effectively in writing, mainly for expository and argumentative academic purposes, but also for practical purposes, such as writing informal and formal letters, summaries, and short narratives or anecdotes.

The outcomes of the Spanish BA program were recently revised and adopted in December 2017. Among the program outcomes are these that are specifically related to writing:

- **Engage** in interpersonal communication in Spanish in oral and written form in present, past, and future time frames, using connected paragraph-length discourse.

² "What is Writing to Learn?" *Writing Across the Curriculum Clearinghouse*. Colorado State University. 2015. <http://wac.colostate.edu/intro/pop2d.cfm>

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- **Engage** in presentational communication in Spanish in oral and written form in present, past, and future time frames, using connected paragraph-length discourse.
- **Conduct** and **present** independent research into topics related to Hispanic cultures, grammatical concepts, linguistics, and literature.

The Spanish Education K-12 Student Handbook states that students must demonstrate writing proficiency at the Advanced Low level as a prerequisite for student teaching. Students in the BSEd major take an official ACTFL Writing Proficiency Test (WPT), through which their writing skills are rated. The WPT is an internationally-recognized measurement developed by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). Since the requirement to reach Advanced Low writing proficiency is not widely adopted in Spanish Education programs in the United States, IUP graduates of this major are among the best-prepared in Spanish writing in the nation. The following is the description of the Advanced Low level of writing as found in the 2012 *ACTFL Writing Proficiency Guidelines*.³ (All of the descriptions of writing proficiency in this DWP are from these 2012 guidelines).

Writers at the Advanced Low sublevel are able to meet basic work and/or academic writing needs. They demonstrate the ability to narrate and describe in major time frames with some control of aspect. They are able to compose simple summaries on familiar topics. Advanced Low writers are able to combine and link sentences into texts of paragraph length and structure. Their writing, while adequate to satisfy the criteria of the Advanced level, may not be substantive. Writers at the Advanced Low sublevel demonstrate the ability to incorporate a limited number of cohesive devices, and may resort to some redundancy and awkward repetition. They rely on patterns of oral discourse and the writing style of their first language. These writers demonstrate minimal control of common structures and vocabulary associated with the Advanced level. Their writing is understood by natives not accustomed to the writing of non-natives, although some additional effort may be required in the reading of the text. When attempting to perform functions at the Superior level, their writing will deteriorate significantly.

Integration of Writing into Undergraduate Curriculum

Both writing and oral proficiency in the target language are central to the Spanish major programs. There are writing and speaking outcomes for virtually every course in Spanish. The key assessments for most of the courses are either for spoken or written assignments.

Writing instruction in the two departmental majors is integrated through writing-to-learn activities and direct instruction in disciplinary skills and content areas. All basic and intermediate language classes have writing-to-learn activities. SPAN 230, Intermediate Spanish Composition and Grammar, is a required course for all majors and minors; as the

³ <https://www.actfl.org/publications/guidelines-and-manuals/actfl-proficiency-guidelines-2012/english/writing>.

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title suggests, the course focuses on developing writing skills, and includes process essay assignments. Subsequently, a final process essay is the key assessment for SPAN 330, Advanced Composition and Grammar, and for all 300- and 400-level Spanish literature and culture courses. Three very similar rubrics are used to evaluate the final papers in these courses: one for SPAN 330 (for the final research paper); one for the three 300-level culture courses (for papers on cultural investigation); and one for 300- and 400-level literature courses (for papers on critical literary analysis). The three rubrics capture the continuum of writing goals across various course levels.

Communicating Writing Expectations to Students

The department communicates writing expectations to undergraduate students through program requirements, course outcomes, and course assignments. The department also publishes a multilingual magazine called *Prism*, which encourages students to produce and read academic writing in various genres, including poems, short stories, comic strips, travel vignettes, and academic essays. The DAC also developed a statement of Department Commitment to Writing to include on all syllabi for courses that will be a part of the writing-enriched curriculum.

“The IUP Department of Foreign Languages is committed to helping students improve their writing skills in the target language toward the goal of being able to communicate as professionals in the field do. Department faculty are committed to introducing, emphasizing, and reinforcing these skills and abilities throughout the curriculum.”

Writing Outcomes Curriculum Map

The Writing Outcomes Curriculum Map demonstrates:

- Conscious effort on the part of department faculty at placing core disciplinary genres at appropriate levels of the curriculum, scaffolding and reinforcing the writing skills necessary for students to succeed in writing those genres.
- Thoughtful integration of writing-to-learn activities in most courses in the curriculum.
- Balanced measures for assessing writing as process and product, that is, writing is graded for demonstrating understanding of course content as well as improvement of writing skills over time.

In this DWP, the 2012 *ACTFL Writing Proficiency Guidelines* are used as a guide for the kinds of skills that departmental courses are helping students to develop. In other words, the course assignments push students to practice skills that are at a higher level of writing proficiency than the actual proficiency level of most students. For that reason, this document states that the *goal* in the courses is to have students write at a certain proficiency level. In general, the actual proficiency level of students is not measured by any official test, except in the case of the BSEd students, who take the WPT just before student teaching.

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As noted above, similar rubrics are used for final papers in both 300- and 400-level courses. While it is hoped that a student's writing skills will improve between his or her third and fourth year, it is difficult to set a different standard for achievement between 300- and 400-level coursework because students are not strictly forced to take 300-level courses in their third year and 400-level courses in their fourth. Third-year students can take 400-level courses if they have met the prerequisites, and some fourth-year students may be still taking 300-level courses to complete their requirements. It should also be noted that students enter both majors with varying proficiency levels depending on their pre-college experience with Spanish. It is conceivable that even a second-year student could be taking 300- and 400-level courses, if he or she placed out of or at the top of 200-level courses as an entering freshman. Courses taken during study abroad experiences also influence the proficiency levels of students.

Note that in November 2018, the department made some small revisions to the wording of the course outcomes for Spanish 102 and 201; the revisions were part of an effort to update the course assessment information for these courses that are part of the Liberal Studies curriculum. Those changes are noted in red in the tables below.

Course	Expected Writing Outcomes	Sample Writing-to-Learn Activities	Sample Writing-to-Communicate Assignments in Academic or Professional Genres
	Writing outcomes may be implicit –writing skills or genre knowledge you want students to leave class with but don’t state as outcomes on your syllabus; or explicitly listed as course objectives (usually the mastery of a disciplinary or professional genre)	These are activities in and out of class that are meant to help students explore and experiment with course content through writing. Students are not expected to demonstrate mastery of course content in this type of writing. WTL is not usually graded, or it may be graded simply for completeness.	These are assignments where students are expected to demonstrate mastery of course concepts; they are either specific to academia (essays, projects, research papers) or are specific to the profession or discipline. They are written to a specific audience.
<p>When students complete the 100 level, the goal is that they be able to write at the Novice High Level. It should be noted that 100-level courses are <i>not</i> required for the Spanish major nor minor programs.</p> <p>According to the WPG, “Writers at the Novice High sublevel are able to meet limited basic practical writing needs using lists, short messages, postcards, and simple notes. They are able to express themselves within the context in which the language was learned, relying mainly on practiced material. Their writing is focused on common elements of daily life. Novice High writers are able to recombine learned vocabulary and structures to create simple sentences on very familiar topics, but are not able to sustain sentence-level writing all the time. Due to inadequate vocabulary and/or grammar, writing at this level may only partially communicate the intentions of the writer. Novice High writing is often comprehensible to natives used to the writing of non-natives, but gaps in comprehension may occur.”</p> <p>At the 100-level, the expected writing skills are to produce short sentences and rudimentary paragraphs (not connected paragraphs) that somewhat effectively communicate about topics related to the writer’s daily experience. These skills are introduced in 101 and reinforced in 102.</p>			
Course	Expected Writing Outcomes	Sample Writing-to-Learn Activities	Sample Writing-to-Communicate Assignments
101	Communicate effectively in simple written forms: words, phrases and short sentences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a schedule of what you do on a particular day. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do some research to find out about an athlete or celebrity from a Spanish-speaking country or with Latino/Hispanic family background. Write a short composition about this person, his/her sport or talent, and why this person is of interest to you.
102	<p>Communicate effectively in written form through paragraphs about events that occurred in the past.</p> <p>The November 2018 revision reads: “communicate effectively in written form through strings of sentences about events in the present and in the past.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a grocery list for a meal or set of meals. • Write a packing list for a trip, noting why you need some of the clothing you plan to take. • Imagine that you have to send a text message to someone whom you have never met, telling the person how to identify you when you meet for the first time. Write a short description of yourself and the clothes you are wearing. • Imagine that you left something in your room and you need for your roommate to find it and bring it to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a short composition about this person, his/her sport or talent, and why this person is of interest to you. • Write a short want ad describing the kind of housing you and your roommates are seeking. • Create a brochure that describes your hometown, noting a few places of interest and what one can do there. • Do some research on common foods from a Spanish-speaking country and write a composition about the ingredients of two dishes, and when they are usually eaten.

		<p>you. Write a short note describing the object and explaining where to find it in your room.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a list of activities that you used to do regularly when you were a child or teenager, with whom, and where. 	
<p><u>When students complete the 200 level, the goal is that they be able to write at the Intermediate Low level.</u></p> <p>According to the WPG, “Writers at the Intermediate Low sublevel are able to meet some limited practical writing needs. They can create statements and formulate questions based on familiar material. Most sentences are recombinations of learned vocabulary and structures. These are short and simple conversational-style sentences with basic word order. They are written almost exclusively in present time. Writing tends to consist of a few simple sentences, often with repetitive structure. Topics are tied to highly predictable content areas and personal information. Vocabulary is adequate to express elementary needs. There may be basic errors in grammar, word choice, punctuation, spelling, and in the formation and use of non-alphabetic symbols. Their writing is understood by natives used to the writing of non-natives, although additional effort may be required. When Intermediate Low writers attempt to perform writing tasks at the Advanced level, their writing will deteriorate significantly, and their message may be left incomplete.”</p> <p>At the 200 level, it is expected that students be able to produce effective short sentences and rudimentary paragraphs, not connected paragraphs. Spanish 230 and 260 introduce and reinforce the connecting of paragraphs to communicate about topics that are not necessarily of personal concern. Spanish 260 introduces the research paper so the information literacy skills and citing skills come into play.</p>			
Course	Expected Writing Outcomes	Sample Writing-to-Learn Activities	Sample Writing-to-Communicate Assignments
201	<p>Communicate effectively in written form through paragraphs about events that occurred in the past.</p> <p>The November 2018 revision reads: “communicate effectively in written form through strings of sentences about events in the present and in the past.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a diary entry, explaining what you did on a particular day or occasion. • With your groupmates, write a short story about a funny incident. • Imagine where you will be, what you will be doing, and what you will have 10 years from now. Write a description of your ideal future life. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do some research on a holiday, festival, or celebration in a Spanish-speaking country, and write a short description of what people do and what objects they use to celebrate the occasion. • Write a paragraph that summarizes a short story and expresses your opinion of the main character.
Course	Expected Writing Outcomes	Sample Writing-to-Learn Activities	Sample Writing-to-Communicate Assignments
230	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Produce cohesive paragraph length writing and writing that consists of multiple connected paragraphs; 2. Create written products with the audience in mind (formal, informal, academic, etc.); 3. Engage in writing as a process by means of pre-writing, creating drafts, revising, and participating in peer editing; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A group of unusual objects is placed on the table. Students must describe the objects without directly identifying them. The descriptions are read aloud in small groups and students must guess which object is being described. • Students place the first part of a detective story in a logical order, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students locate an authentic job advertisement online and write a letter of application. The letters of application are posted on a “job board” in D2L. Students must then select an application letter and reply as if they were the hiring company. They may revise their written work. • Students write final drafts of process essays, having taken the essays through various steps

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Incorporate targeted grammatical structures into their writing; 5. Create descriptions of people and places from various perspectives such as physical, subjective, etc.; 6. Write summaries of newspaper/magazine articles; 7. Communicate with others by means of written correspondence such as letters and email (interpersonal writing); 8. Narrate anecdotes and stories in present, past, and future; 9. Produce writing that is understood by those who are accustomed to the writing of non-natives. 	<p>and then compose the story using transition words. Students either write the conclusion or an alternate ending.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are provided with an excerpt and must write a direct citation, a paraphrase, and a brief summary of a specific section. • In preparation for the final paper, students develop a semantic map – a visual representation of the various potential components of the topic. This schematic map is used during library instruction to help students narrow down or expand their final paper topic. 	<p>and two drafts.</p>
260	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss the works read in present, past and future time frames and use connected paragraph-length discourse in Spanish; 2. Identify the characteristics and theoretical concepts of three basic literary genres: narrative, poetry and drama; 3. Analyze selected readings in narrative, poetry and drama; 4. Use technical vocabulary to discuss the selected readings; 5. Demonstrate an understanding of the course materials by analyzing selected works in writing and by writing a research paper on a work not studied in class. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write 2-3-sentence answers to guiding questions that probe your comprehension, analysis, and interpretations of readings. • Make a list of five words that you interpret as key words in a poem, and for each word, write a statement or two about the word's effects. • Write a plot summary of a short story or play. • Choose two characters from the narrative, and write a description of each, comparing and contrasting them. • Write an interpretation of a poem, explaining what you think is its main theme and why. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a short composition analyzing the one aspect of a literary work, such as the characterization in a short story or novel, or the use of metaphors and imagery in a poem. • Do research on a work of literature not studied in the course and write an essay which argues for your own interpretation of an aspect of the work, and which cites published sources that support your argument or offer different interpretations.

When students complete the 300 level (typically 4-5 courses), the goal is that they be able to write at the Intermediate Mid level.

Students in the Spanish BA are required to take SPAN 330, 340, either 342 or 344, and either 362 or 364, and one more course numbered 342 or above, except SPAN 390. Students in the BSEd are required to take SPAN 330, 340, either 342 or 344, a course numbered 300 or above, and 362, 364 or a 400-level course.

According to the WPG, “Writers at the Intermediate Mid sublevel are able to meet a number of practical writing needs. They can write short, simple communications, compositions, and requests for information in loosely connected texts about personal preferences, daily routines, common events, and other personal topics. Their writing is framed in present time but may contain references to other time frames. The writing style closely resembles oral discourse. Writers at the Intermediate Mid sublevel show evidence of control of basic sentence structure and verb forms. This writing is best defined as a collection of discrete sentences and/or questions loosely strung together. There is little evidence of deliberate organization. Intermediate Mid writers can be understood readily by natives used to the writing of non-natives. When Intermediate Mid writers attempt Advanced-level writing tasks, the quality and/or quantity of their writing declines and the message may be unclear.”

At the 300 level, writing in connected paragraphs about academic topics is reinforced. The skills of argumentation and exposition are introduced and reinforced in Spanish 330 and expected in the culture and literature survey courses, as are information literacy and citing skills. The key assessment for all the 300-level courses is a final research paper, and there are two rubrics to evaluate these papers, one for culture courses and one is for literature courses. Regardless of the content-focus, the rubrics measure most of the same skills.

Course	Expected Writing Outcomes	Sample Writing-to-Learn Activities	Sample Writing-to-Communicate Assignments
330	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Produce formal academic writing that will be understood by native speakers unaccustomed to the writing of second language learners; 2. Write papers that consist of connected paragraphs across topics related to particular interests and points of view; 3. Write extemporaneously (without benefit of extensive revision); 4. Create written narrations and descriptions in the past time frame; 5. Explain, analyze, compare and contrast through expository writing; 6. Support an opinion or argument and hypothesize through argumentative writing; 7. Interpret authentic texts in Spanish (e.g., magazines, newspapers, internet sources, literary works) through writing; 8. Analyze and use grammatical structures to communicate in written form at the Advanced level of proficiency; 9. Analyze, interpret, and synthesize information to produce an academic research paper on a topic of interest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In class writing assignment: Students read an article/article excerpt, and must write a response to it, using what they have learned about expressing opinions and composing a good essay. • Students are provided with two thesis statements, and they are required to choose one and write a 2-page argumentation in favor of or against the topic, writing in class spontaneously. • Students write three journal entries each week, 5-7 sentences minimum each entry (total of 10 weeks of entries or 30 entries), as extemporaneous writing. • Students write ideas for a descriptive essay, as a brainstorming exercise. • Students write two preliminary drafts of each of the process essays in the course. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students write final drafts of process essays, having taken the essays through various steps and two drafts. Students in the course write three process essays, one argumentative, one expository, and one narrative. • Students write a final draft of a research paper (“the final paper”), on a topic chosen the student and approved by the instructor.

340	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Express and defend in written form informed opinions on key figures, events, and concepts through the early nineteenth century in Hispanic cultures; 2. Recognize cultural trends as they developed in Hispanic cultures, and in European and world cultures as a whole; 3. Explain main ideas and key details of authentic Hispanic materials; 4. Analyze, compare, and contrast cultural products, practices, and perspectives of Hispanic cultures from various time periods; 5. Conduct research on assigned topics through early nineteenth-century Hispanic cultures and synthesize research into an expository and argumentative paper written in Spanish according to Modern Language Association guidelines; 6. Communicate effectively in Spanish in written form 	<p>Sample WTL activities for 340, 342, and 344</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write 2-3-sentence answers to questions that probe your comprehension, analysis, and interpretation of readings or viewings. • Write a 2-paragraph composition, comparing and/or contrasting and/or explaining the relationship between two historical or cultural events, figures, or phenomena. • Write your own definitions and explanations of key concepts, after having read published definitions. 	<p>Sample WTC assignments for 340, 342, and 344</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose a significant person, event, phenomenon, cultural practice, or cultural product. Research the topic and write an expository and/or argumentative essay about that topic.
342	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe Spain’s ethnic, linguistic, regional, racial, and religious diversity; 2. Identify and describe key figures, events, trends, and concepts in 19th, 20th- and 21st-century Spanish culture; 3. Explain the values, norms, and ideals expressed in these key figures, events, trends, and concepts; 4. Express and defend in written form informed opinions on key figures, events, trends, and concepts in 19th-, 20th- and 21st-century Spanish culture; 5. Explain how key figures, events, trends, 		

	<p>and concepts are interrelated across time;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Describe Spain’s relationships with the United States, Spanish America, Europe, and North Africa; 7. Analyze, compare, and contrast cultural products, practices, and perspectives of Spanish culture with those of the United States, Spanish America, Europe, North Africa, and with the student’s own culture; 8. Explain main ideas and key details of authentic Spanish cultural products within their historical and cultural contexts (products including newspaper and magazine articles, literary texts, audio and/or video recordings, works of art, etc.); 9. Collect, evaluate, and interpret information from various reliable sources on topics related to the course; 10. Synthesize collected information into an expository and argumentative essay; 11. Communicate effectively in Spanish in written form, using present, past, and future time frames and connected paragraph-length discourse. 		
344	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and describe in their historical contexts the major political, social, artistic, and literary trends that have shaped Spanish-American societies from the beginning of the nineteenth century to the present. 2. Explain the values and ideals expressed in these major political, social, artistic, and literary trends. 3. Explain how these major political, social, artistic, and literary trends are 		

	<p>interrelated among themselves, across time, and across geographical regions.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Evaluate the impact of some of these significant trends, events, concepts, and figures, and defend informed opinions about them. 5. Compare and contrast some cultural products, practices, and perspectives of Spanish-American countries with those of the United States or the student's own culture. 6. Evaluate political, military, and economic interventions and cultural influences of the United States in Spanish America. 7. Explain main ideas and key details of authentic cultural products from Spanish America within their historical and cultural contexts (products including newspaper and magazine articles, literary texts, musical pieces, works of art, audio recordings, video recordings, and films). 8. Synthesize information collected from reliable sources into an expository and argumentative essay on a topic related to the course; 9. Communicate effectively in Spanish in written form, using past, present, and future time frames and connected paragraph-length discourse. 		
362	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Derive meaning from selected literary texts read in original Spanish through an analysis of them. 2. Explain selected literary texts read in original Spanish. 3. Define and describe periods and movements in Spanish literary history. 4. Correlate knowledge of social, political 	<p>Sample WTL activities for 362 and 364</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write 2-3-sentence answers to guiding questions that probe your comprehension, analysis, and interpretations of readings. • Write a plot summary of a narrative literary work (poem, story, novel, or 	<p>Sample WTC assignments for 362 and 364</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a composition of two or three paragraphs, analyzing one or two aspects of a literary work a selected work. • Do research on a work of literature not studied in the course and write an essay which argues for your own interpretation of one or more aspects of the work, and which

	<p>and literary history to specific literary works read for class.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Compare in written format authors, periods and specific literary works in both spoken and written Spanish. 6. Conduct research on a given author, period or literary work and present results in both a written and oral format. 7. Identify author and title of literary work read in class from short excerpt of same. 8. Write a detailed “explanation of text” in Spanish on an assigned reading. 9. Write in present, past, and future time frames and use connected paragraph-length discourse in Spanish. 	<p>play) or a summary of the main points of an essay.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select a scene in a narrative or a stanza in a poem, and write a paragraph about why you interpret this passage as particularly expressive of or against important values or problems of the society and culture in which it was written. • Choose two characters from a narrative, and write a description of each, comparing and contrasting them. • Write an interpretation of a literary work, explaining what you think is its main theme and why. 	<p>cites published sources that support your argument or offer different interpretations.</p>
364	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and describe the major literary movements, authors, and works of Latin American literature from the sixteenth century to the twentieth century. 2. Identify some of the religious, political, economic, and cultural factors that influenced the literary production of Latin America. 3. Demonstrate an understanding of the ways that Latin America has been described on its own terms and in its relationship to Spain 4. Describe the structure and context of selected literary works. 5. Discuss the ways that selected literary works reflect some aspects of the societies in which they were produced. 6. Conduct research about certain literary works and prepare an essay based on the results. 		

When students complete the 400 level (typically 2-3 courses), the goal is to be able to write at the Intermediate High or Advanced Low level.

According to the WPG, “Writers at the Intermediate High sublevel are able to meet all practical writing needs of the Intermediate level. Additionally, they can write compositions and simple summaries related to work and/or school experiences. They can narrate and describe in different time frames when writing about everyday events and situations. These narrations and descriptions are often but not always of paragraph length, and they typically contain some evidence of breakdown in one or more features of the Advanced level. For example, these writers may be inconsistent in the use of appropriate major time markers, resulting in a loss of clarity. The vocabulary, grammar, and style of Intermediate High writers essentially correspond to those of the spoken language. Intermediate High writing, even with numerous and perhaps significant errors, is generally comprehensible to natives not used to the writing of non-natives, but there are likely to be gaps in comprehension.”

According to the WPG, “Writers at the Advanced Low sublevel are able to meet basic work and/or academic writing needs. They demonstrate the ability to narrate and describe in major time frames with some control of aspect. They are able to compose simple summaries on familiar topics. Advanced Low writers are able to combine and link sentences into texts of paragraph length and structure. Their writing, while adequate to satisfy the criteria of the Advanced level, may not be substantive. Writers at the Advanced Low sublevel demonstrate the ability to incorporate a limited number of cohesive devices, and may resort to some redundancy and awkward repetition. They rely on patterns of oral discourse and the writing style of their first language. These writers demonstrate minimal control of common structures and vocabulary associated with the Advanced level. Their writing is understood by natives not accustomed to the writing of non-natives, although some additional effort may be required in the reading of the text. When attempting to perform functions at the Superior level, their writing will deteriorate significantly.”

Students in the BA major are required to take two 400-level courses numbered 400-431. Students in the BSEd are required to take SPAN 330, 340, 342 or 344, and one other 300-level course and one course that is either 300- or 400-level (numbered 400-431). Formerly, both BA and BSEd students were required to take their 400-level courses from the literature courses numbered 410-431. Now SPAN 402 has been included as a course that can meet this requirement. At the 400 level, it is expected that students will be able to write connected paragraphs for argumentative and expository purposes on academic topics, with proper documentation of sources.

Course	Expected Writing Outcomes	Sample Writing-to-Learn Activities	Sample Writing-to-Communicate Assignments
402	Translate from Spanish to English and, to a lesser degree, from English to Spanish.	Do short sight translation passages from your major or field of interest.	Report on a Latin American country, a region of Spain or an aspect of translation or interpretation.
410	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate an understanding of selected materials representative of Spanish medieval literature by discussing and writing about the plot, theme, main characters, main idea, and structure. 2. Demonstrate knowledge of the historical/ social/ political situations important to the development of Spanish medieval literature. 3. Express their opinions about the selections read for class through discussion and by completing homework 	<p>Sample WTL Activities in a 400-level literature class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write 2-3-sentence answers to guiding questions that probe your comprehension, analysis, and interpretations of readings. • Write a plot summary of a narrative literary work (poem, story, novel, or play) or a summary of the main points of an essay. • Write your own description of the most important values of the literary movements studied. 	<p>Sample WTC Activities in a 400-level literature class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a composition of two or three paragraphs, analyzing one or two aspects of a literary work a selected work. • Do research on a work of literature not studied in the course, and write an essay which argues for your own interpretation of one or more aspects of the work, and which cites published sources that support your argument or offer different interpretations.

	<p>activities.</p> <p>4. Conduct a critical investigation of a work not covered in class and prepare a paper that presents the results of this research.</p> <p>5. Access authentic Spanish resources (especially texts).</p> <p>6. Write in present, past, and future time frames, and use connected paragraph-length discourse in Spanish.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select a scene in a narrative or a stanza in a poem, and write a paragraph about why you interpret this passage as particularly expressive of or against important values or problems of the society and culture in which it was written. • Write an interpretation of a literary work, explaining what you think is its main theme and why. 	
411	<p>1. Derive meaning from selected literary texts read in original Spanish through an analysis of them.</p> <p>2. Explain selected literary texts read in original Spanish.</p> <p>3. Define and describe periods, movements and genres in “golden age” Spanish literary history.</p> <p>4. Correlate knowledge of social, political and literary history to specific literary works read for class.</p> <p>5. Compare in oral and written format authors, periods, genres and specific literary works from Spain’s “golden age”.</p> <p>6. Conduct research on a given author, period or literary work and present results in both a written and oral format.</p> <p>7. Write a detailed “explanation of text” in Spanish on an assigned reading.</p> <p>8. Write in present, past, and future time frames and use connected paragraph-length discourse in Spanish.</p>		
412	<p>1. Demonstrate an understanding of six novels representative of three important periods in the development of the Spanish novel (the nineteenth century, the generation of 1898, and the post Civil War) by discussing and writing about the plot, theme, main characters,</p>		

	<p>and main ideas.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Demonstrate knowledge of the historical/social/political situations important to the development of the Spanish novel. 3. Demonstrate knowledge of the key literary movements of the three periods studied and relevant literary theory. 4. Express their opinions about the novels read for class through discussion and by writing a journal. 5. Conduct an investigation of a novel not covered in class and prepare a paper that presents the results of this research. 		
421	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate an understanding of short stories in Hispanic literature. 2. Demonstrate knowledge of the historical/social/political situations important to the development of Hispanic short stories. 3. Demonstrate knowledge of the key literary movements and historic periods that contributed to the development of Hispanic literature. 4. Analyze the short stories read for class through written discussions. 5. Demonstrate an understanding of Hispanic short stories through preparation of a research paper on works by a Hispanic short story writer. 		
430	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will demonstrate an understanding and an ability to analyze literary works of Spanish prose of the 20th and 21st centuries. 2. Students will discuss essential characteristics, comparing and contrasting selected works. 3. Students will discuss the literary movements' characteristics of the 		

	<p>selected prose. 4. Students will analyze selected literary works according to: time, space, point of view, characters, plot, genre, self-reflection, dialogue/monologue, ambiance, title, structure, cultural identity, rebellion, etc.</p>		
431	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate knowledge of the major movements and trends of Hispanic-American poetry from the Pre-Columbian period to the present; 2. Identify the most important poets of the region and some of their best-known works; 3. Analyze selected poetic works in terms of the voice, the tone, the subjectivity, and the community; 4. Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the poetic works and the historical and social contexts in which the texts were produced; 5. Conduct research on certain poetic works and prepare an essay of the results. 		

Collection of Baseline Data

Given the various facets of the Spanish Education and BA programs, including variable timing and length of participation in study abroad programs, the best point to assess student writing achievement in both majors is in the advanced literature classes (SPAN 410-431/ 481). This is not a perfect measurement, because while students in these courses are predominantly seniors, due to a wide spectrum of second language ability, these advanced courses may also enroll juniors and, although very rarely, sophomores. It would be very difficult, and statistically insignificant, to isolate only seniors in these classes, especially as performance level is tied to ability in the second language even more than it is to class standing. For these reasons, data analyses of these courses will not take class standing into account. The Key Assessment in all 400-level literature courses is a final research-based process essay written in Spanish; all instructors of these courses use the same rubric for the evaluation of this process essay.

The rubric that was placed here in the original DWP was erroneous. The next pages provide the correct rubric.

SPANISH 300- and 400-Level Literature Classes
Rubric: Final Paper: Critical Literary Analysis
ACTFL/CAEP Standards Addressed: 1b, 1c, 2c

Criteria	EXCEEDS 4	ACCEPTABLE HIGH 3	ACCEPTABLE LOW 2	UNACCEPTABLE 1
<p>Content of Paper</p> <p>ACTFL/CAEP 2c</p>	<p>Ideas throughout the paper show evidence of original, creative, and critical thinking (such as analysis, interpretation, comparison, synthesis, and evaluation). Paper provides reader with appropriate amount of background and contextual information. The paper presents sound conclusions. Thesis is of appropriate scope for the length of the paper. Paper may exceed length requirements.</p>	<p>Ideas throughout the paper show evidence of originality and most show evidence of creative and critical thinking. Paper provides reader with appropriate amount of background and contextual information. Majority of conclusions presented in paper are sound. Thesis may be somewhat lacking in the scope for the length of the paper. Paper meets length requirements.</p>	<p>Some of the ideas in the paper show evidence of originality and/or ideas show some creativity and critical thinking. And/or paper does not provide reader with sufficient background and contextual information. And/or some conclusions are not sound. And/or paper does not quite meet length requirements.</p>	<p>Ideas presented in paper are not student's original ideas. And/or paper lacks evidence of creative and critical thinking. And/or paper includes little or no background and contextual information for reader. And/or conclusions are not sound. And/or paper does not meet length requirements.</p>
<p>Originality and Quality of Thesis</p> <p>ACTFL/CAEP 2c</p>	<p>Thesis reflects high degree of originality and relevance and clearly states the main point of paper in an engaging manner.</p>	<p>Original and relevant thesis that clearly states the main point of paper.</p>	<p>Thesis is original but either lacks relevance or does not clearly state the main point of paper.</p>	<p>Unoriginal thesis and/or thesis is either irrelevant or does not clearly state the main point of paper.</p>
<p>Quality of Research and Use of Sources*</p> <p>ACTFL/CAEP 1b,</p>	<p>All instructions followed. Paper integrates appropriate types of sources and exceeds required number of sources. Paper carefully distinguishes between student's own ideas and those of others. Paper consistently adheres to MLA guidelines for format, page numbering, citations,</p>	<p>All instructions followed. Paper integrates appropriate types and number of sources. Paper distinguishes between student's own ideas and those of others. Paper mostly adheres to MLA guidelines for format, page numbering, citations, footnotes/endnotes, and</p>	<p>May be some part of instructions not followed. Paper integrates sources but either type or number of sources may be lacking. Paper may be inconsistent in distinguishing between student's ideas and those of others. Paper deviates in several places from to MLA guidelines for format, page numbering,</p>	<p>At least half of instructions not followed. Little to no integration of appropriate types and number of sources. Paper may not distinguish between student's ideas and those of others. Paper shows little evidence that student consulted MLA guidelines for writing research</p>

1c, 2c	footnotes/endnotes, and bibliography/list of works cited. Appropriate use of direct quoting enhances thesis. The number, length, and frequency of direct quotes enhances thesis.	bibliography/list of works cited, although there may be a few errors. There is some use of direct quoting.	citations, footnotes/endnotes, and bibliography/list of works cited. There are several instances of excessive direct quoting or there is too little use of direct quotes.	papers. Paper may rely too much on direct quoting or utilize no direct quotes.
Organization & Argumentation ACTFL/CAEP 1c, 2c	All ideas support the thesis. Argument is completely and logically developed. Ideas are consistently organized in a series of paragraphs that include connector words, transitional expressions, and varied sentence structure. Paper avoids verbatim repetition and inappropriate copying of material.	All ideas support the thesis. Argument is logically developed but may not be totally complete. Ideas are mostly consistently organized in a series of paragraphs that include connector words, transitional expressions, and varied sentence structure. There is little verbatim repetition and/or inappropriate copying of material.	Most ideas do not support the thesis. And/or argument may not be totally logical or complete. Inaccurate paragraph and/or sentence structure (i.e., use of connector words and transitional expressions) may compromise argument in parts of paper. And/or there are several instances of verbatim repetition and/or inappropriate copying of material.	Very few of the ideas support the thesis. Argument lacks logic and/or completeness. Inaccurate paragraph and/or sentence structure (i.e., use of connector words and transitional expressions) may compromise argument throughout paper. And/or paper relies heavily on verbatim repetition and/or inappropriate copying of material.
Grammatical Accuracy & Mechanics ACTFL/CAEP 1c	High degree of accuracy. No major patterns of errors; may be a few minor errors. Paper is fully comprehensible. Consistent use of correct spelling, capitalization, accent marks, and punctuation; virtually no typos.	High degree of accuracy, particularly in use of verb tenses, aspect, and mood. May be a few major patterns of errors and some minor errors. Paper is fully comprehensible. May have a few errors in the use of spelling, capitalization, accent marks, and/or punctuation, but no major patterns of errors; may have a few typos.	Parts of essay are accurate, particularly in use of verb tenses, aspect, and mood. Some major patterns of errors and minor errors that may make some parts difficult to understand. May have several major patterns of errors in one or more of the following: spelling, capitalization, accent marks, punctuation; may have several typos throughout.	Essay is largely incomprehensible due to inaccuracy of grammar. Paper may have major patterns of errors in spelling, capitalization, accent marks, punctuation throughout, as well as typos.

<p>Vocabulary</p> <p>ACTFL/CAEP 1c</p>	<p>Uses rhetorically appropriate vocabulary. No major vocabulary errors. English influence not apparent. No “non-specific vocabulary”** or repetition of vocabulary.</p>	<p>Usually uses rhetorically appropriate vocabulary. May be a few errors that do not affect message. No “non-specific vocabulary”** or repetition of vocabulary.</p>	<p>Mostly rhetorically appropriate vocabulary but several examples of inappropriate or “nonspecific vocabulary”**. May demonstrate English influence at times and/or may repeat vocabulary a few times.</p>	<p>Little evidence of rhetorically appropriate vocabulary. Many errors in vocabulary choice. English influence pervasive in essay. May use “nonspecific vocabulary”** and/or may repeat vocabulary often.</p>
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*If the instructor determines that inappropriate copying of materials from sources (i.e., plagiarism) is apparent in the paper, the student will receive a grade of “0” as a final grade on the paper.

**“Non-specific vocabulary” = examples: cosas, personas, tiene, bien/bueno.

The prompt for the final research-based essay will vary from course to course depending on course content. A sample prompt appears below.

“You will prepare a research paper in Spanish, eight (8) double-spaced, typed pages in length (12-point font, 1-inch margins, page numbers). You must use the Modern Language Association format (*MLA Handbook*, 8th edition) for your bibliography and in-text formatting and citations. Research papers will be thesis driven, with original conclusions, and supported by at least five outside sources. You will work with the professor to choose a topic that is both relevant to the course and that requires comparison/ contrast and synthesis of ideas. The creation of your final paper occurs over the entire semester, not just in the week before it is due. Each part of the process must be completed on time and in full; there is a more detailed explanation of the final paper in your course packet. See course outline for deadlines for each component.”

To establish a baseline for assessment of writing in the 400-level literature courses, in early spring 2019, the DAC analyzed aggregate Key Assessment data from four semesters (not three, as was stated erroneously in the original DWP) of 400-level literature courses (2016-2017 and 2017-2018). A target of 75% of scores of Acceptable or above was set for all rubric categories.

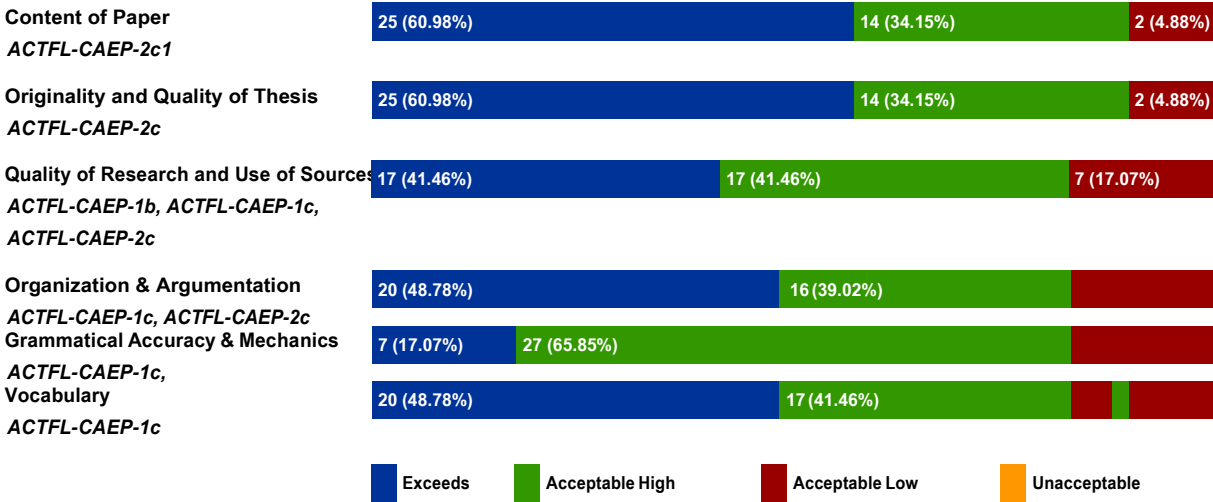
The data analyzed was actually from these four semesters of 400-level literature courses:

- in fall 2016 SPAN 412 The Spanish Novel of the 19th and 20th Centuries (enrollment 13);
- in spring 2017 SPAN 430 20th-Century Spanish American Prose (enrollment 8);
- in fall 2017 SPAN 481 Spanish Identity through Pop Culture (enrollment 13);
- in spring 2018 SPAN 481 Passing for Spain (enrollment 7).

The total enrollment of these courses (the sample size for the key assessment data) was 41.

**SPAN 400-level literature classes Fall 2016-Spring 2018
Critical Literary Analysis**

	Exceeds (4 pts)	Exceeds (4 pts)	Acceptable High (3 pts)	Acceptable High (3 pts)	Acceptable Low (2 pts)	Acceptable Low (2 pts)	Unacceptable (1 pts)	Unaccepta ble (1 pts)	n
Content of Paper	25	60.98%	14	34.15%	2	4.88%	0	0.00%	41
Originality and Quality of Thesis	25	60.98%	14	34.15%	2	4.88%	0	0.00%	41
Quality of Research and Use of Sources*	17	41.46%	17	41.46%	7	17.07%	0	0.00%	41
Organization & Argumentation	20	48.78%	16	39.02%	5	12.20%	0	0.00%	41
Grammatical Accuracy & Mechanics	7	17.07%	27	65.85%	7	17.07%	0	0.00%	41
Vocabulary	20	48.78%	17	41.46%	4	9.76%	0	0.00%	41



Data analysis shows that 100% of scores in all rubric categories were Acceptable or above, far surpassing the target of 75%. While these results are good, there are still students performing at the Acceptable Low level, particularly in the categories of Quality of Research/ Use of Sources and Grammatical Accuracy/ Mechanics. Moving these students from Acceptable Low to Acceptable High or even Target in every rubric category could be the focus of future curricular changes and will be examined again in the next assessment cycle. The DAC presented the results of this pilot assessment to department faculty in spring 2019 as part of the DWP approval process.

Establishment of Assessment Procedures and Timeline

The assessment of writing in the 400-level literature courses will be carried out by the DAC every two years, using the previous two years of aggregate final process essay rubric data. This schedule is built into the timing chart of the department's overall assessment plan. Aggregate Key Assessment data (Final process essay) for 400-level literature classes will be collected again in 2020-2021. These data will include classes from 2018-2019 and 2019-2020. The DAC will compare these data to the baseline data, report to the department, and make recommendations about curricular adjustments that may need to be made to improve the writing performance of Spanish majors.

In addition, annual records of Spanish Education majors' performance on the WPT will be kept and included in assessment reports as evidence of majors' program achievement in writing. As noted earlier, all Spanish Education majors must achieve a rating of Advanced Low on the ACTFL Proficiency scale before they can student teach. Advanced Low is a level that takes dedicated writing practice to attain and is clear evidence that our majors have met our program writing goals.

Implementation and Assessment of Department Writing Plan

The IUP WAC Director recommends these action items for continuing program facilitation:

- The Foreign Languages DAC will be responsible for assessment of, and updates to, the DWP as needed.
- Provide all faculty with the DWP and recommend attendance at WAC workshops or the May two-day writing workshop for Liberal Studies faculty.
- Faculty should add "Department Commitment to Writing" statement to syllabi as appropriate.
- Conduct assessment of writing in 410-431/ 481 classes every two years.
- Through faculty development seminars, workshop attendance, and writing-enriched curriculum, attempt to move assessment results toward more students demonstrating all measured skills at the Acceptable High and Target levels (75% Acceptable High or Target in all rubric categories).
- Annually compile statistics of Spanish Education majors' performance on the WPT.
- Continue to update the writing outcomes curriculum map as courses are added, removed, and revised in the curriculum of the Spanish majors (and communicate these changes to the IUP WAC Director).

Approval of the Foreign Languages Department Writing Plan

At a meeting on March 18, 2019, the faculty of the Department of Foreign Languages voted to support the original Department Writing Plan. **At a September 2021 meeting, faculty approved the revisions.**

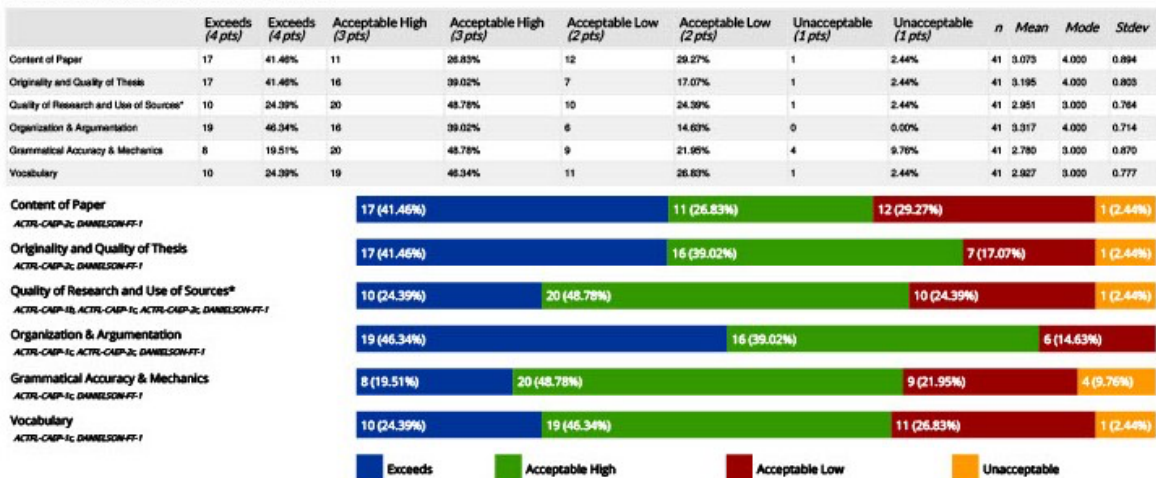
Biennial Assessment: The Current Data (2018-2020)

The data for the current assessment cycle comes from three courses over four semesters.

- In fall 2018 SPAN 410 Medieval Literature (enrollment 17)
- In spring 2019 a 400-level literature course was not offered
- In fall 2019 SPAN 412 The Spanish Novel of the 19th and 20th Centuries (enrollment 14)
- In spring 2020 SPAN 413 Spanish Poetry of the 19th and 20th Centuries (enrollment 10)

The total enrollment of these courses (sample size) was 41, coincidentally the same number as the sample from the baseline.

Rubric: Critical Literary Analysis Rubric



A Comparison of Baseline Data with Current Data

The DWP set the target at having at least 75% of students score in the range of Acceptable or above (with Acceptable Low being included in the range) in all rubric categories. The current data shows that this target was met again. The current data is similar to that of the baseline, with a notable difference. The baseline had 100% of students scoring in the Acceptable range or above in all criteria. The current data has approximately 98% of students scoring in the Acceptable range or above in all but the category of Grammatical Accuracy and Mechanics (approximately 90%).

Last updated October 2021

The next page has a comparison of other differences in the baseline and current data, with a focus on those samples scored in the ranges of Acceptable Low and Unacceptable. Again, the sample size for both the baseline and the current data was the same (41 students).

Criterion	2016-18 samples scored in the Acceptable Low and Unacceptable ranges	2018-20 samples scored in the Acceptable Low and Unacceptable ranges
Content of paper	2 samples (4.88%)	13 samples (31.71%)
Originality and Quality of Thesis	2 (4.88%)	8 (19.51%)
Quality of Research and Use of Sources	7 (17.07%)	11 (26.83%)
Organization and Argumentation	5 (12.2%)	6 (14.63%)
Grammatical Accuracy and Mechanics	7 (17.07%)	13 (31.71%)
Vocabulary	4 (9.76%)	12 (29.27%)

Given that the spring 2020 semester had significant disruption due to the pandemic, it is worth noting how many samples of the current data scored in the two lower ranges during that semester.

Criterion	2018-20 samples scored in the Acceptable Low and Unacceptable ranges	Number of those samples that were from the spring 2020 sample
Content of paper	13 samples (31.71%)	3 of 13 (23%)
Originality and Quality of Thesis	8 (19.51%)	3 of 8 (37%)
Quality of Research and Use of Sources	11 (26.83%)	6 of 11 (54.5%)
Organization and Argumentation	6 (14.63%)	3 of 6 (50%)
Grammatical Accuracy and	13 (31.71%)	5 of 13 (38.4%)

Mechanics		
Vocabulary	12 (29.27%)	5 of 12 (41.66%)

The most striking difference between the baseline and current data is in the rubric category of Content. There was a marked increase in the number of student samples scored in the Acceptable Low and Unacceptable ranges: from 2 (4.8%) in the baseline to 13 (approximately 31%) in the current data.

There were also significant increases in the number of students scoring in the two lower ranges for all the other criteria except that of Organization and Argumentation.

Some recommendations

A salient question, then, is “How can instructors help all students to strengthen their research writing skills so that more students can ultimately score in two highest ranges in all criteria in the 400-level literature courses, which all Spanish BA and Spanish BSED students must take?”

One recommendation might be to provide explicit instruction in writing effective and original thesis statements and in selecting and documenting sources. Such instruction should ideally be included from the first course in which research writing is introduced (Spanish 260 Introduction to Hispanic Literature), through the SPAN 330 Advanced Spanish Composition and Grammar and the 300-level culture and literature courses, with review in the 400-level literature courses. Perhaps the group of instructors can collaborate on developing or sharing a set of lessons and examples.

Another recommendation is to make sure that students have a very clear understanding of the expectations for the content of their research essays in all of the courses noted above. It may also help to have a personal conference with all or selected students, either about an outline before they write the first draft or just after writing the first draft of the final essay.

With regard to improving the use of grammar, mechanics, and vocabulary, it may help the students who have difficulty in those areas to receive specific written feedback on their initial drafts, with the aim of helping them to address patterns of errors. For example, instructors can highlight errors in student work and have students correct the errors.

Peer review activities can also be an effective strategy for helping students to identify, evaluate, and correct various weaknesses in their writing, including the thesis, the content, organization, and grammar.

Last updated October 2021

It should be noted that in spring 2020, the semester disrupted by the pandemic, in the Spanish 413 course Spanish Poetry of the 19th and 20th Centuries, half of the 10 students who completed the course were pursuing a major in Spanish and the other half were pursuing a minor. In that same spring 2020 semester, the Spanish 350 Advanced Conversation course was not offered as it had been in spring 2019. There is some evidence in the student records that are still accessible at this writing, that at least some of the students in the 413 course were Spanish minors who, for whatever reason, had not taken a 300-level Spanish course before taking Spanish 413. Those students might have chosen to take Spanish 350 if it had been offered in spring 2020. (Two other 300-level courses were offered in spring 2020: Spanish 330 Advanced Composition and Spanish 342 Spanish Cultures from the 19th Century to the Present.)

The minor requires students to take Spanish 220, 230, 260, 330, and then two courses at the 300 or 400 level. With a smaller number of faculty members, the department has been having to cancel an increasing number of upper-level courses. Those cancellations (along with possible scheduling conflicts with the students' other required courses) may be constraining the course options, particularly for minors, leading them to take 400-level courses to complete the minor, even if they are not yet prepared to take those courses.

Two recommendations can spring from the current situation. One is that the assessment data start to keep track of how many students in the 400-level courses are majors and how many are minors, and how many 300-level courses they have taken before taking the 400-level course. Another is that the curriculum and assessment committees start to review program requirements and course prerequisites, as well as curriculum and schedules.