



First Nations Studies | 2016-2017 Assessment Report

1. Please give a brief overview of the assessment data you collected this year.

In 2016-17, FNS assessed four learning outcomes related to language. These were chosen given the recent change in FNS to make FNS 301 Oneida Language I (or Indigenous language equivalent) a requirement for all of our majors and minors. This requirement was implemented to adequately prepare students to meet the following learning outcomes:

Language:

1. Students will identify the major language families on Turtle Island and explain how languages change over time.
2. Students will understand the importance of language and cultural revitalization efforts.
3. Students will demonstrate some acquisition of a First Nations language.
4. Students will engage in language acquisition in a tribal setting.

Assessments took place in FNS 226 Intro to First Nations Studies: Social Justice and, primarily in FNS 301 Oneida Language 1. Student learning in FNS 301 was measured in oral projects, oral exam presentations, and written linguistic translations. In FNS 226, learning was measured in written essay questions, written discussion questions, and written essay exams.

2. How will you use what you've learned from the data that was collected?

Through the assessment process, FNS faculty learned students in FNS 226 are fully meeting Language Outcome #2: *Students will understand the importance of language and cultural revitalization efforts*. However, in FNS 226, students are not meeting Language Outcomes 1, 3, and 4. This was expected and is, in part, why the program moved to requiring all FNS majors/minors to take 3 credits of FNS 301 Oneida Language 1 (or 3 credits of other Indigenous language).

In the assessment conducted in FNS 301 Oneida Language 1, the faculty learned that students are exceeding Language Outcomes 1, 2, and 3.

However, students completing FNS 226 and FNS 301 may not be meeting Language Outcome #4 *Students will engage in language acquisition in a tribal setting*. Most FNS majors do meet Language Outcome #4 in other required classes that including FNS 302 Oneida Language 2, FNS 303 Oneida Language 3, FNS 304 Oneida Language 4, and FNS 399 First Nations Oral Traditions. However, these courses are not required of the FNS minors. This means that some FNS minors can graduate without meeting Language Outcome #4.

This assessment process was very valuable to the FNS faculty as key questions emerged such as, “what is a tribal setting?” The faculty agree that this learning outcome was never fully discussed or defined. Thus, in 2017/18, the FNS faculty will discuss Language Outcome #4 to define “tribal setting” and determine if it is limited to a physical setting or includes a pedagogical setting. This is a critical discussion given the steady decline in the number of Indigenous language speakers and the declining opportunities for students to acquire language in a tribal community. Thus, through discussion, the FNS faculty will also plan and further implement ways to ensure that all FNS majors and minors are meeting Language Outcome #4 and engaging in language acquisition in a tribal setting.