



## German | 2014-2015 Assessment Report

1. Please give a brief overview of the assessment data you collected this year. This can be in any form you feel is appropriate, such as a table, a short narrative of results, statistical analysis, highlighting findings that were of particular interest, etc. You will, however, likely want to submit results for each learning outcome you assessed this year individually.

The Learning Outcome the German Program assessed this year was Learning Outcome #4: “Write about non-technical topics at the intermediate-high/advanced ACTFL level.” The direct assessment we conducted consisted of analyzing a range of six (6) different components of writing proficiency present to varying degrees in student writing samples, collected in response to assignments given in two upper-level German courses offered this year: German 355 in Fall 2014 and German 329 in Spring 2015. To assist us in assessing these aspects of our students’ writing, we developed a rubric adapted from the national foreign language ACTFL Writing Proficiency Guidelines (2012). These guidelines are relied upon nationally and internationally as a measure of language proficiency and categorize language learners’ abilities into 5 proficiency levels: Distinguished / Superior / Advanced / Intermediate / Novice. Each proficiency level is further subdivided into High / Mid / Low. The six (6) abilities ACTFL focuses on with regard to writing skills are: Comprehensibility, Discourse Type, Vocabulary Usage, Language Control, Accuracy and Focus and Organization. The results of this assessment are below:

### Assessment Results 2014-2015

German Writing Assessment Rubric – adapted from ACTFL Writing Proficiency Guidelines (2012)			
1 - Advanced High	2 - Advanced Mid	3 - Advanced Low	4 - Intermediate High
5 - Intermediate Mid	6 - Intermediate Low	7 - Novice High	8 - Novice Mid

#### German 355: Deutsche Kultur und Landeskunde – Fall 2014:

German Writing Rubric - ACTFL	Comprehensibility	Discourse Type	Vocabulary and Usage	Language Control	Accuracy	Focus and Organization
<b>Average Score</b>	3.71	3.07	3.9	3.9	4.0	3.6
Course Average	<b>3.69</b>					

#### German 329: Representative German Authors – Spring 2015:

German Writing Rubric - ACTFL	Comprehensibility	Discourse Type	Vocabulary and Usage	Language Control	Accuracy	Focus and Organization
<b>Average Score</b>	4.0	3.2	3.7	3.9	4.6	3.5
Course Average	<b>3.81</b>					

**Overall Average of Writing Proficiency in both Courses: 3.75** (Intermediate High to Advanced Low)

75% of German majors assessed obtained a ranking between Intermediate-High and Advanced-Low and 12.5% performed higher than Advanced-Low.

From these combined results we learned that:

The overall average of student writing proficiency in both upper-level courses combined (3.75) puts our students on average at the Intermediate-High to Advanced-Low level of proficiency (indeed half of them perform at the higher end, at the Advanced-Low level), indicating that they are meeting our expectation set in Learning Outcome #4.

Expressed in terms of percentages:

- 12.5% of German majors assessed obtained a ranking of Advanced-Mid (in the 2+ range).
- 50% of German majors assessed obtained a ranking of Advanced-Low (in the 3+ range).
- 25% of German majors assessed obtained a ranking of Intermediate-High (in the 4+ range)
- 12.5% of German majors assessed obtained a ranking of Intermediate-Mid (in the 5+ range)

We also learned that these students performed worst on the category of writing accuracy and best on their ability: 1.) to organize and focus their writing and 2.) to meet expectations for basic academic writing.

2. **How will you use what you've learned from the data that was collected? Some examples are: particular improvements to the curriculum, incorporation of a different pedagogy, a change in assessment plan for the following year in order to obtain more specific feedback, better information or a better response rate, a determined need for faculty development in a particular area, better career alignment, a faculty retreat to discuss the data and how best to use it, etc.**

Half of our students (50%) are performing at the Advanced-Low level in writing proficiency, indicating in general, that when compared with assessment results from last year (2013-2014), which ranked our students' oral proficiency at Intermediate-High, their written communication is somewhat superior to the benchmark for their spoken proficiency. We may want to discuss having two different benchmarks in the future, one for oral and another for written proficiency.

Since accuracy is the aspect of writing our students find most challenging, we may also want to spend more time focusing on this skill in our third-year courses and perhaps make more extensive use of writing rubrics in our third- and fourth-year courses.

We may also want to revisit and continue improving our adaption of the ACTFL writing rubric to make it more closely geared to and reflective of what we value in student writing in German.

Once all German faculty members are back on campus, we plan to meet and discuss these results and look forward to discussing them with the Modern Language faculty as well.