



## German | 2015-2016 Assessment Report

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

For 2015-16, we assessed students' cultural competencies in Fall 2015 using the final exam for GERM 357: German Cinema and HIST 423: Topics in Modern European History—Nazi Germany.

The assignment for the final paper for GERM 357 was as follows:

In considering the idea of a “national” cinema, what do films since the fall of the Berlin Wall have to say about Germany in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? You should focus on two-three films and you will be required to research the paper using at least five non-internet secondary sources, which can include articles that what we have read for class. You will be required to submit an outline of your paper and brief bibliography before the Thanksgiving break.

For HIST 423, the term paper was a topic of choice (in consultation with the instructor) related to the subject of the class. Topics ranged from the Gestapo to the influence of the occult to resistance movements.

Benchmark	Comments	Summary
“Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied.”	This standard focuses on the practices that are derived from the traditional ideas and attitudes (perspectives) of a culture. One of the most important and far-reaching aspects of German society and culture is the impact of the Holocaust and National Socialism on German culture and society. In HIST 423, students were asked to research and reflect on certain aspects of the legacy of National Socialism.	The final paper for HIST 423 allowed students to focus more in-depth on a narrower window of Germany history, society and culture. Papers were well researched and demonstrated a solid knowledge and understanding of the period.
“Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied.”	This standard focuses on the products of the culture studied and on how they reflect the perspectives of the culture. In the case of German Cinema, the “product” was film production. Cinema, perhaps more so than other art forms, is a collaborative production and, as film critics have argued, therefore is a strong reflection of cultural perspectives.	In general, student papers reflected insightfully on the complexity of German identity in a globalized, 21 <sup>st</sup> century. They showed an understanding of how multiculturalism has impacted “traditional” German identity as well as how the European Union has also expanded on it. Moreover, they recognize the impact of National Socialism on these discourses. One area of weakness was the more recent political history of the Federal Republic—both the left-wing activism of the 1960s and 70s as well as the influence of the GDR on German society in the 20 <sup>th</sup> century.

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

**Recommendations:**

Overall students have a very good understanding of the forms (“products”) of cultural production. Our curriculum has slowly moved away from a traditional literature-based curriculum to one more culturally oriented. We currently have three courses devoted specifically to culture GERM 355 Deutsche Kultur und Landeskunde, GERM 357 German Cinema, and GERM 356 German Culture. The HIST 423 Topics class provides students with an opportunity to study a period or theme in greater historical detail, which has also expanded their overall understanding of practices and perspectives when dealing with a German topic. Students have over the past few years indicated on the senior survey that we administer that they would like a class on German politics or perhaps a course on East Germany (GDR). The German faculty has discussed the possibility of making GERM 355 a two-semester sequence in which we might add a course on German politics and society or on the GDR.