*We have taken this opportunity to relook closely at our previous assessment plan. As a result, we have redesigned the learning objectives and expanded some of the assessment tools we are now using. Much of our previous plan relied solely on student feedback and perceptions. We believe this is important, but the new plan adds some more direct measures. The data we report in other sections and in the data-based decision section are based on the information we have previously been collecting. New data will be gathered starting with the 2016-2017 academic year.

Languages
Assessment Plan

The framework that we use for our learning objectives reflects the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Standards of Foreign Language Learning, the 5 C's (Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities) in our classrooms. As such, many of the rubrics used for assessment in the various language programs adhere to nationally recognized standards. Following are the learning objectives along with information about how each one is assessed.

1. Students are proficient in speaking, listening, reading, and writing in their language of study.

> Source of data to assess learning objective one: Student work from the following courses: FREN 3060/4060, 3090/4090, 3900, 4610, 4900; GERM 3040, 3300, 3600, 4610, 4900; SPAN 4900, 4910, 4930.
> Rubrics to be used for assessment: Please see appendices A, B, and C in this document. Each of these rubrics are based, in part, on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL) standards for reading, writing, listening, and speaking as well as on other standards for literary/cultural interpretation.
> Frequency of assessment and reporting of data: Data for this learning objective is collected in each of the above courses whenever they are offered throughout the academic year (i.e., at least two courses per language, per year). Each language section reports/uploads their assessments for this learning objective by the end of the spring semester. Individual and averaged aggregate scores in each language program for this learning objective are uploaded to the languages assessment page on the LPCS website. Faculty members in each language section also meet at the end of each spring semester and discuss the assessment information/scores and determine any necessary curricular changes needed. We will also receive feedback from recent graduates through a survey sent out each summer designed to assess their perception of how we are doing with this objective (see appendix D).

2. Students will be able to interpret a variety of cultural products (texts, films, music, art, photography, etc.).

> Source of data to assess learning objective two: Student work from the following courses: FREN 3060/4060, 3090/4090, 3900, 4610, 4900; 4900; GERM 3040, 3300, 3600, 4610, 4900; SPAN 4900, 4910, 4930.

Rubric to be used for assessment: Please see appendix A which is based, in part, the ACTFL standards for reading and writing as well as on other standards for literary/cultural interpretation.

Frequency of assessment and reporting of data: Data for this learning objective is collected in each of the above courses whenever they are offered throughout the academic year (i.e., fall and/or spring semesters). Each language section reports/uploads their assessments for this learning objective by the end of the spring semester. Individual and averaged aggregate scores in each language program for this learning objective are uploaded to the languages assessment page on the LPCS website. Faculty members in each language section also meet at the end of each spring semester and discuss the assessment information/scores and determine any necessary curricular changes needed. We will also receive feedback from recent graduates through a survey sent out each summer designed to assess their perception of how we are doing with this objective (see appendix D).

3. To expose students to methods of inquiry and research appropriate to the humanities.

Source of data to assess learning objective: Student work from the following courses: FREN 3060/4060, 3090/4090, 3900, 4610, 4900; GERM 3040, 3300, 3600, 4610, 4900; SPAN 4900, 4910, 4930.

Rubric to be used for assessment three: Please see appendix A which is based, in part, the ACTFL standards for reading and writing as well as on other standards for literary/cultural interpretation.

Frequency of assessment and reporting of data: Data for this learning objective is collected in each of the above courses whenever they are offered throughout the academic year (i.e., fall and/or spring semesters). Each language section reports/uploads their assessments for this learning objective by the end of the spring semester. Individual and averaged aggregate scores in each language program for this learning objective are uploaded to the languages assessment page on the LPCS website. Faculty members in each language section also meet at the end of each spring semester and discuss the assessment information/scores and determine any necessary curricular changes needed. We will also receive feedback from recent graduates through a survey sent out each summer designed to assess their perception of how we are doing with this objective (see appendix D).

4. To prepare students for a broad selection of professional activities appropriate to the 21st century job market in which knowledge of a foreign language is important, including primary/secondary language instruction, as well as graduate or other professional studies.

Source of data to assess learning objective four: We will be surveying our recent graduates using the survey found in appendix D.

Frequency of assessment and reporting of data: Data for this learning objective is collected each summer from language majors who have graduated in the last year. The LPCS department reports/uploads its assessment for this learning objective by the end of

the spring semester. Individual and averaged aggregate scores for this learning objective are uploaded to the languages assessment page on the LPCS website at this time as well. Faculty members in each language section meet at the end of each spring semester and discuss the assessment information/scores and determine any necessary curricular changes needed.

5. Modern language teaching majors and minors will understand theories and research about second language learning and current teaching methodologies that promote communicative competence.

Source of data to assess learning objective five: Student work from the LING 4400 course required of all language teaching majors and minors.

Rubric to be used for assessment: An example of a sample test questions from LING 4400 and an assessment rubric is found in Appendix E.

Frequency of assessment and reporting of data: Data for this learning objective is collected in the above course whenever it is offered during the academic year (i.e., typically each fall semester). The faculty member teaching this course reports/uploads their assessment for this learning objective by the end of the spring semester. Individual and averaged aggregate scores in each language program for this learning objective are uploaded to the languages assessment page on the LPCS website. Faculty members in each language section also meet at the end of each spring semester and discuss the assessment information/scores and determine any necessary curricular changes needed. We will also receive feedback from recent graduates through a survey sent out each summer designed to assess their perception of how we are doing with this objective (see appendix D).

Appendix A

Rubric for
Learning Objective 1 (i.e., reading and writing abilities)
Learning Objective 2 (interpreting cultural products)
Learning Objective 3 (methods of inquiry/research in the Humanities)

Preliminary Note: The following rubric is based, in part, on ACTFL standards for reading and writing, as well as on other standards for literary/cultural interpretation and research in our field. Each student's work is assessed with regards to Objectives 1, 2, and 3 on a point scale of 1 to 4 (with 4 being the highest). While the highest possible score of 12 would indeed be achievable by

	4	3	2	1
Linguistic accuracy and comprehensibility (Learning Objective 1, writing)	Writer uses language correctly, and *precisely* including grammar taught in that course, spelling, word order, and punctuation. Uses complex sentence structures, conjunctions, etc. Uses all appropriate formal, academic, or professional style. Reader can always understand what the writer is trying to communicate. Communicates ideas effectively; includes elements of persuasion or interpretation, etc.	Writer uses most of the language correctly, including grammar, attempts but does not use complex sentence structures or more difficult grammar accurately. Uses some formal, academic, or professional style, some idiomatic or slang terms. Reader can understand most of what the writer is trying to communicate.	Writer has some problems with basic grammar usage or is inconsistent. Frequently uses slang terms or lacks formal, academic, or professional style. Reader can understand less than half of what the writer is trying to communicate.	Writer makes a significant number of basic errors in language usage, such as basic conjugations, present tense, agreements, etc. Lacks appropriate formal, academic, or professional style. Reader can understand little of what the writer is trying to communicate.
Interpreting literary	4	3	2	1

our very best students, our goal for our majors is a cumulative score of at least 9 in each of the categories expressed in the rubrics (i.e., linguistic accuracy and comprehensibility, interpreting literary and cultural texts, and research methods in the Humanities). A score of 9 represents an acceptable level of competence in these areas and demonstrates the benchmark for success in the achievement of our learning objectives as a whole.

and cultural texts (Learning Objective 2, and Learning Objective 1, reading)	Writer shows understanding of provided text. Uses all of the interpretive tools and critical language taught in class applied to the given text (for example, discusses theme, context, images, stylistic elements, cultural references, etc. of a literary text according to assignment). Able to synthesize material and move beyond basic comprehension or summary. Shows cultural understanding and knowledge; able to make cultural comparisons.	Writer fulfills all requirements of the assignment. Uses some of the interpretive tools taught in the class (for example some understanding of context, style, form, content, etc.). Limited ability to move beyond basic comprehension and summary. Some effective or original synthesis of material. Shows some detailed knowledge of the other culture.	Writer fulfills requirements of the assignment. Unable to use interpretive tools or critical language applied to the text. Demonstrates understanding of text, but cannot move beyond summary. Makes some limited cultural references with limited understanding.	Writer fulfills few requirements of the assignment. Does not demonstrate understanding of the given text. No synthesis of material at all. Makes no cultural references; does not show cultural understanding.
	4	3	2	1
Research methods of the Humanities (Learning Objective 3)	Writer uses appropriate secondary research sources to support their central thesis and ideas. Sources include academic articles, books, and essays. Writer cites sources correctly (using MLA style) and appropriately incorporates research findings into essay. Use of bibliography shows a sophisticated knowledge of the field of inquiry.	Writer uses some secondary research sources to support their thesis and ideas. Use of sources, citing abilities, knowledge of MLA style, and/or bibliography may be limited or lacking. Research skills are sufficient and show some detailed knowledge of the field of inquiry.	Writer uses few secondary research sources to support their thesis and ideas. Some sources may be non-academic. Use of sources, citing abilities, knowledge of MLA style, and/or bibliography are insufficient. Research paper shows only a limited knowledge of the field of inquiry.	Writer uses no appropriate secondary research sources. Lack of research shows little to no knowledge of field of inquiry.

Appendix B

A note about listening tasks used at USU: Assessing second language listening ability in our language programs may be done via a number of different tasks; some of which will combine the assessment of listening alongside speaking (e.g., via an interactive presentation whereby the student not only talks about a project, but also answers various questions/comments from the instructor and/or fellow students). In many instances, however, listening may be assessed via tasks that isolate/assess a student's listening ability. Language majors in our programs should attain, at minimum, listening proficiency at the *Advanced Mid*-level but may range through the *Superior* level on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL) Guidelines for Listening (2012). The following rubric reflects the various levels/range of listening proficiency to be assessed.

Sample rubric to be used to assess listening

Holistic Evaluation	Levels of Listening Proficiency
4 pts.	*able to understand speech in a standard dialect on a wide range of familiar and less familiar topics. *understands speech that typically uses precise, specialized vocabulary and complex grammatical structures. *comprehension is no longer limited to the listener's familiarity with subject matter, but also comes from a command of the language that is supported by a broad vocabulary, an understanding of more complex structures and linguistic experience within the target culture. [Superior]
3 pts.	*able to understand, with ease and confidence, conventional narrative and descriptive texts of any length as well as complex factual material such as summaries or reports. *are able to comprehend the facts presented in oral discourse and are often able to recognize speaker-intended inferences. *able to derive some meaning from oral texts that deal with unfamiliar topics or situations. [Advanced High]
2 pts.	*able to understand conventional narrative and descriptive texts, such as expanded descriptions of persons, places, and things, and narrations about past, present, and future events. *understands the main facts and many supporting details. *comprehension derives not only from situational and subject-matter knowledge, but also from an increasing overall facility with the language itself. [Advanced Mid]
	*listeners are able to understand short conventional narrative and descriptive texts with a clear underlying structure though their comprehension may be uneven.

1 pt.	*understands the main facts and some supporting details. *comprehension may often derive primarily from situational and subject-matter knowledge. [Advanced Low]

Note: Guidelines/parameters used to determine whether or not a language program is effectively addressing listening (part of learning objective #1) are as follows:

*The listening objective is exceeded when the average score for the assessed students in a language program falls in the range of 3.0 to 4.0 points.

*The listening objective is met when the average score for the assessed students in a language program falls in the range of 2.0 to 2.9 points.

* The listening objective is not met when the average score for the assessed students in a language program falls in the range of 0 to 1.9 points.

Appendix C

<u>A note about the speaking task used at USU</u>: The primary oral evaluation task in many of the classes in our language programs is an in-class oral presentation. Language majors in our programs should attain, at minimum, an oral proficiency at the Advanced level based on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL) Guidelines for Speaking (2012). The following describes what successful language majors should be able to do at the Advanced level:

Speakers at the Advanced level engage in conversation in a clearly participatory manner in order to communicate information on autobiographical topics, as well as topics of community, national, or international interest. The topics are handled concretely by means of narration and description in the major time frames of past, present, and future. These speakers can also deal with a social situation with an unexpected complication. The language of Advanced-level speakers is abundant, the oral paragraph being the measure of Advanced-level length and discourse. Advanced-level speakers have sufficient control of basic structures and generic vocabulary to be understood by native speakers of the language, including those unaccustomed to non-native speech.

Sample rubric to be used to assess speaking

Holistic Evaluation	Levels of Oral Proficiency
4 pts.	*able to explain in detail and narrate fully and accurately in all time frames. *may provide a structured argument to support their opinions, and they may construct hypotheses, but patterns of error appear. *demonstrates a well-developed ability to compensate for an imperfect grasp of some forms or for limitations in vocabulary by the confident use of communicative strategies, such as paraphrasing, circumlocution, and illustration. [Advanced High]
3 pts.	*able to narrate and describe in the major time frames of past, present, and future by providing a full account, with good control of aspect. *can participate actively in most informal and some formal exchanges on a variety of concrete topics relating to work, school, home, and leisure activities, as well as topics relating to events of current, public, and personal interest or individual relevance. *can handle successfully and with relative ease the linguistic challenges presented by a complication or unexpected turn of events that occurs within the context of a routine situation or communicative task and their vocabulary is fairly extensive although primarily generic in nature, except in the case of a particular area of specialization or interest. [Advanced Mid]
	* demonstrate the ability to narrate and describe in the major time frames of past, present, and future in paragraph-length discourse with some control of aspect.

2 pts.	*able to participate in most informal and some formal conversations on topics related to school, home, and leisure activities. *speech is typically marked by a certain grammatical roughness (e.g., inconsistent control of verb endings); vocabulary often lacks specificity. [Advanced Low]
1 pt.	* can narrate and describe in all major time frames using connected discourse of paragraph length, but not all the time. * able to handle successfully uncomplicated tasks and social situations requiring an exchange of basic information related to their work, school, recreation, particular interests, and areas of competence. * when Intermediate High speakers attempt to perform Advanced-level tasks, their speech exhibits one or more features of breakdown, such as the failure to carry out fully the narration or description in the appropriate major time frame, an inability to maintain paragraph-length discourse, or a reduction in breadth and appropriateness of vocabulary. [Intermediate High]

Note: Guidelines/parameters used to determine whether or not a language program is effectively addressing speaking (part of learning objective #1) are as follows:

*The speaking objective is exceeded when the average score for the assessed students in a language program falls in the range of 3.0 to 4.0 points.

*The speaking objective is met when the average score for the assessed students in a language program falls in the range of 2.0 to 2.9 points.

* The speaking objective is not met when the average score for the assessed students in a language program falls in the range of 0 to 1.9 points.

Appendix D

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS WHO
GRADUATED WITH A SPANISH MAJOR**
Department of Languages, Philosophy, & Communication Studies
Utah State University

1. Name

2. Please list any minors and/or double majors?

3. Please evaluate your languages classes regarding each of the following learning objectives:

Objective 1:
Students will be proficient in speaking, listening, reading, and writing in their language of study.

With respect to this objective my classes were effective:
__ Strongly agree
__ Agree
__ Neutral
__ Disagree
__ Strongly disagree

Objective 2:
Students will be able to interpret a variety of cultural products (texts, films, music, art, photography, etc.).

With respect to this objective my classes were effective:
__ Strongly agree
__ Agree
__ Neutral
__ Disagree
__ Strongly disagree

Objective 3:
Students will be exposed to methods of inquiry and research appropriate to the humanities.

With respect to this objective my classes were effective:
__ Strongly agree
__ Agree

__ Neutral
__ Disagree
__ Strongly disagree

Objective 4:

To prepare students for a broad selection of professional activities appropriate to the 21st century job market in which knowledge of a foreign language is important, including primary/secondary language instruction, as well as graduate or other professional studies.

With respect to this objective my classes were effective:
__ Strongly agree
__ Agree
__ Neutral
__ Disagree
__ Strongly disagree

The following objective is directed <u>only at students with a teaching emphasis</u>; if you are <u>not</u> a teaching major, <u>please skip and move to the next question.</u>

Objective 5:

Modern language teaching majors and minors will understand theories and research about second language learning and current teaching methodologies that promote communicative competence.

With respect to this objective my classes were effective:
__ Strongly agree
__ Agree
__ Neutral
__ Disagree
__ Strongly disagree

4. We would like to stay in touch with you. What are your post-graduation plans? Please include information concerning a job, graduate school, or professional school.

5. Please provide post-graduation contact information, if possible. This information will be confidential.

a. E-mail address:

b. Postal address:

c. Phone number:

6. We are very interested in your feedback. Please include any general comments you would like to make about your experiences in the Spanish program and the Department of Languages, Philosophy, and Communication Studies (areas of strength or areas for improvement).

Appendix E

Excellent/Expert – 3	Good/Competent - 2	Weak/Beginner – 1
Demonstrates a thorough understanding of how to apply theories and research to practical problems facing language teachers. Grounds explanations and recommendations for addressing teaching challenges in multiple theories and multiple research studies. Clearly recognizes multiple nuances of challenging settings in language instruction.	Demonstrates some awareness of how theories and research may be used to approach practical problems facing language teachers. Able to identify at least one relevant theory or research study in providing explanations for recommendations. Recognizes that language instruction challenges may be met in more than one way.	Unable to make connections between theories and research related to teaching and practical problems facing language teachers. No suggestions or recommendations for language instructors are grounded in theory or research study. Only able to articulate one idea when assessing a challenging language instruction situation.

SAMPLE EXAM QUESTIONS:
(samples provided by Dr. M.L. Spicer-Escalante)

Note: You need to answer the questions as if you were explaining it to someone who is not familiar with SLA and its terminology. Thus, you need to **define** and **clearly explain** (*as a professional SL teacher*) the terms and concepts that you use in responding your questions. It is necessary that you not only know the different concepts but also how to apply them. In order to get credit, you must respond thoroughly to the questions.

1) Imagine that you have an interview with a School Principal and that you need to explain to him/her the main differences between the Audiolingual Methodology (associated with the Atlas Complex) and the CLT. Define each methodology and clearly express which one is better for SLA and why?
> • Address your response to a potential School Principal who is not familiar with the complex process of SLA.
> • Include an *Introduction* and a *Conclusion* for your explanation
> • What is the role of the teacher in each methodology?
> • What is the role of the students in each methodology?
> • What are the advantages and/or disadvantages of these two methodological approaches of teaching foreign languages? Why? Justify your answers

2) Explain to a group of colleagues how second languages are acquired, according to the research in the field. Specifically, explain how SLA takes place and what is the role of the teacher in the different processes involved in acquisition.

• Include an *Introduction* and a *Conclusion* for your explanation
• What is the importance of input in SLA?
• How can we make input comprehensible in the classroom?
• What are some of the strategies that the teacher must take into consideration to teach the L2 in a meaningful way?

3) Explain to a group of new language teachers what classroom communication (CC) is. Explain to them why, according to research, language teachers do not teach communicatively. Explain the main three reasons.

• Include an *Introduction* and a *Conclusion* for your explanation
• What is the main purpose of the CC? Why?
• What is the role of the teacher?
• What is the role of the student?
• What type of activities/strategies can be designed why?
• What are the advantages of CC? Why? Justify your answers