

Program-Level Continuous Improvement Process (CI-Process) Basics

Program Basics	<p>Program Name: State formal program name from list of ADHE- or UCA-recognized programs.</p> <p>Master of Arts in Spanish</p>
	<p>Program Purpose: State WHY this program exists. The purpose should support the University, College, and Department mission statements, but it should NOT be a reiteration of those statements.</p> <p>Students obtaining the Master of Arts degree in Spanish will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attain advanced-high level proficiency in the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. • gain advanced knowledge of the literatures, cultures, linguistics, and civilizations of the Spanish-speaking world. • demonstrate higher-level critical thinking skills in areas such as evaluation, synthesis, and analysis of literature, linguistics, and cultural discourse. • demonstrate knowledge of research methods and resources, as well as methodologies relevant to their areas of interest.
Program Goals (Typically programs have 2-4 goals)	<p>Program goals state the faculty's broad expectations of the knowledge, skills, or abilities held by program completers.</p> <p>Goal 1: Students will improve communication skills in Spanish and meet exit proficiency requirements</p>
	<p>Goal 2:</p> <p>Students will demonstrate advanced content knowledge.</p>
	<p>Goal 3:</p> <p>Students will demonstrate higher-level critical thinking skills in their work.</p>
	<p>Goal 4:</p> <p>Students will demonstrate knowledge of research methods and resources.</p>
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Program-Level Continuous Improvement Process (CI-Process) Plan

Closing the Loop Process	Data Collection	<p>Who & How: Indicate who will collect the data and how data will be collected.</p> <p>Spanish graduate faculty will collect the data during the Spanish M.A. Comprehensive Written and Oral Examinations. Students turn in their writing portfolios at the Oral Examination.</p>
		<p>Timeline: Indicate when the data will be collected.</p> <p>Spanish M.A. students take the Master's Comprehensive Examinations during the semester following completion of all course work. The Spanish graduate division first provides the candidate with the date of the written exam, which takes place during two days in the second month of classes (February or October). After the written exam is completed and passed, a date will be set for the oral exam, usually the last Friday of the semester before final exams.</p>

Data Analysis	<p>Who: Indicate who, by name or position, is responsible for organizing the data and performing an initial analysis of the data to determine the extent to which the benchmarks for the tested student learning outcomes were achieved.</p> <p>The Spanish M.A. Graduate Coordinator will coordinate collection of proficiency ratings and other assessments completed by the Spanish graduate faculty for each student. The MA coordinator will perform the initial data analysis.</p> <p>Timeline: Indicate when the data will be analyzed.</p> <p>In May of each year. Due to Chair by June 1.</p>
Data Dissemination	<p>Who & How: Indicate who will share data with relevant faculty and how data will be shared.</p> <p>The Spanish Graduate Coordinator will email a written report to all Spanish graduate faculty and the Department Chair by June 1 of each year. The Department Chair will include the Spanish M.A. Assessment Report in the Annual Report done each summer.</p> <p>Timeline: Indicate when the data will be shared.</p> <p>Initial results shared with Spanish faculty by June 1 of each year. The Annual Report will include the Spanish M.A. Assessment Report and will be completed and shared with the faculty by July 15 of each year.</p>
Resulting Actions	<p>How: Indicate how the Program Director will formally share results and present desired program changes with the Responsible Authority</p> <p>The Annual Report will include the Spanish M.A. Assessment Report and will be completed and shared with the faculty and Dean of the College of Liberal Arts by July 15 of each year.</p> <p>Timeline: Indicate when the data and faculty feedback will be shared.</p> <p>Spanish M.A. faculty will meet in the first week of September to discuss the previous academic year's M.A. assessment report.</p>
Re-assessment/Evaluation	<p>How: Indicate how the desired program changes will be put into place and what data will be collected following the changes. If process for collecting and analyzing data is different than what is stated above, indicate how it will be different here.</p> <p>After the faculty have discussed the results in September, any programmatic changes will be completed over the coming months. The assessment cycle will continue as defined above.</p> <p>Timeline: Indicate when the data will be collected following these changes.</p> <p>During the following year results will be reported and discussed as described above.</p>

CI-Process Student Learning Outcome Information Sheet

Repeat table as needed for each Student Learning Outcome

Student Learning Outcome	Student Learning Outcome	<p>A Student Learning Outcomes is a specific and measurable indicator of student progress toward a program goal(s).</p> <p>OUTCOME 1: Students obtaining the Master of Arts degree in Spanish will achieve advanced-high level proficiency in each of the four language skills assessed: speaking, listening, reading and writing. (Cf. ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012, appended)</p>
	Related Program Goal(s)	<p>State the program goal addressed by this Student Learning Outcome. A “SLO” may address a single goal or multiple goals.</p> <p>Goal 1: Students will improve communication skills in Spanish and meet exit proficiency requirements</p>
	Assessment Activity	<p>State the activity that will be directly assessed for the above Student Learning Outcome.</p> <p>Students’ proficiency in listening and speaking will be assessed in the following way: an oral comprehensive exam in Spanish.</p> <p>Students’ proficiency in reading and writing will be assessed in the following ways: optional thesis written in Spanish, written comprehensive exam in Spanish, oral comprehensive exam in Spanish, and portfolio of writing samples from course work.</p>
	Assessment Method	<p>Explain how the quality of the above activity will be assessed.</p> <p>The four language proficiencies will be assessed according to the ACTFL National Proficiency standards.</p>
	Benchmark	<p>State the performance expectation for the above activity, and some justification for that expectation.</p> <p>Speaking: _____% of the graduating MA students will score at the Advanced-high level <i>or above</i>. (This is a new assessment and benchmarks have not yet been established.) See Criterion 1</p> <p>Listening: _____% of the graduating MA students will score at the Advanced-high level <i>or above</i>. (This is a new assessment and benchmarks have not yet been established.) See Criterion 1</p> <p>Reading: _____% of the graduating MA students will score at the Advanced-high level <i>or above</i>. (This is a new assessment and benchmarks have not yet been established.) See Criterion 1</p> <p>Writing: _____% of the graduating MA students will score at the Advanced-high level <i>or above</i>. (This is a new assessment and benchmarks have not yet been established.) See Criterion 1</p>

	Location	<p>State whom will be assessed using the above activity AND where it will occur.</p> <p>Listening & Speaking: All Spanish M.A. candidates will undergo a ninety-minute oral comprehensive exams in Spanish in an appropriate room or office in Irby Hall.</p> <p>Reading: All Spanish M.A. candidates will undergo at least nine hours of written comprehensive exams on the M.A. Reading List in Spanish in an appropriate room or office in Irby Hall.</p> <p>Writing: All Spanish M.A. candidates will submit their writing portfolio by the end of the semester in which they complete their comprehensive examinations.</p>
	Frequency	<p>State when AND how frequently the above activity will be assessed.</p> <p>Spanish M.A. students take the Master's Comprehensive Examinations during the semester following completion of all course work. The Spanish graduate division first provides the candidate with the date of the written exam, which takes place during two days in the second month of classes (February or October). After the written exam is completed and passed, a date is set for the oral exam, usually the last Friday of the semester before final exams.</p>
Observations	Data Summary	<p>Provide a short summary of the results of the above activity AND the date these results were compiled.</p> <p>Data does not yet exist.</p>
	Result	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Exceeded <input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Did Not Meet The benchmark for this activity (stated above).</p>
	Responsible Authority Analysis	<p>Authority Responsible for Analysis: Provide the position of the person responsible for the program.</p> <p>Graduate Coordinator</p> <p>Date of Analysis: Provide the date on which Responsible Authority reviewed data</p> <p>By June 1 of each year</p> <p>Comments: Provide comments about data from Responsible Authority</p>
Analysis	Department / Area/ Program Faculty	<p>Presented to Program Faculty by: Provide position of person responsible for sharing results with relevant faculty.</p> <p>Graduate Coordinator</p> <p>Date of Presentation: Provide the date on which presentation to faculty was conducted.</p> <p>To be presented during the first week of September each year.</p> <p>Comments: Provide comments about the data from the relevant faculty <i>Example:</i></p>

Semester and/or academic year for which the data applies: 2013-14

	Conclusion	<input type="checkbox"/> Continue to assess next assessment period <input type="checkbox"/> Rotate out of assessment (to be assessed again:) <input type="checkbox"/> Curricular change <input type="checkbox"/> Pedagogic change <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment Process change <input type="checkbox"/> Benchmark change <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
Closing the Loop	Assessment Data-Driven Change	<p>Planned Implementation Date: Provide date on which change(s) will be made based on data for this SLO.</p> <p>Beginning May 2014</p>
	Acknowledgement	<p>Provide signature of Department Chair acknowledging above results.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Date</p>
	Acknowledgement	<p>Provide signature of College committee chairperson or College Dean acknowledging above results.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Date</p>

Student Learning Outcome	Student Learning Outcome	<p>A Student Learning Outcomes is a specific and measurable indicator of student progress toward a program goal(s).</p> <p>OUTCOME 2: Students obtaining the Master of Arts degree in Spanish will gain advanced knowledge of the literatures, cultures, linguistics, and civilizations of the Spanish-speaking world.</p>
	Related Program Goal(s)	<p>State the program goal addressed by this Student Learning Outcome. A “SLO” may address a single goal or multiple goals.</p> <p>Goal 2: Students will demonstrate advanced content knowledge.</p>
	Assessment Activity	<p>State the activity that will be directly assessed for the above Student Learning Outcome.</p> <p>Students will demonstrate advanced knowledge of the literatures, cultures, linguistics, and civilizations of the Spanish-speaking world in the following activities: M.A. thesis (when applicable), oral comprehensive exam, written comprehensive exam, a portfolio of research papers.</p>
	Assessment Method	<p>Explain how the quality of the above activity will be assessed.</p> <p>Spanish M.A. Comprehensive Examination and Portfolio Assessment Rubric (see below)</p>
	Benchmark	<p>State the performance expectation for the above activity, and some justification for that expectation.</p> <p>_____ % of the graduating students will rate “acceptable” on Criterion 2 in the MA Assessment Rubric used to assess M.A. graduates. (This is a new assessment and benchmarks have not yet been established.)</p>
	Location	<p>State whom will be assessed using the above activity AND where it will occur.</p> <p>All Spanish M.A. candidates will undergo a ninety-minute oral comprehensive exam in Spanish in an appropriate room or office in Irby Hall</p> <p>All Spanish M.A. candidates will undergo at least nine hours of written comprehensive exams in Spanish in an appropriate room or office in Irby Hall</p> <p>All Spanish M.A. candidates will submit their writing portfolio by the end of the semester in which they complete their comprehensive examinations.</p>
	Frequency	<p>State when AND how frequently the above activity will be assessed.</p> <p>Spanish M.A. students take the Master’s Comprehensive Examinations during the semester following completion of all course work. The Spanish graduate division first provides the candidate with the date of the written exam, which takes place during two days in the second month of classes (February or October). After the written exam is completed and passed, a date will be set for the oral exam, usually the last Friday of the semester before final exams.</p>
Observations	Data Summary	<p>Provide a short summary of the results of the above activity AND the date these results were compiled.</p> <p>Data does not yet exist.</p>

	Result	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeded <input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Did Not Meet The benchmark for this activity (stated above).
	Responsible Authority Analysis	<p>Authority Responsible for Analysis: Provide the position of the person responsible for the program.</p> <p>Graduate Coordinator</p> <p>Date of Analysis: Provide the date on which Responsible Authority reviewed data</p> <p>By June 1 of each year</p> <p>Comments: Provide comments about data from Responsible Authority</p>
	Department/ Area/ Program Faculty	<p>Presented to Program Faculty by: Provide position of person responsible for sharing results with relevant faculty.</p> <p>Graduate Coordinator</p> <p>Date of Presentation: Provide the date on which presentation to faculty was conducted.</p> <p>To be presented during the first week of September each year.</p> <p>Comments: Provide comments about the data from the relevant faculty</p> <p><i>Example:</i></p>
Analysis	Conclusion	<input type="checkbox"/> Continue to assess next assessment period <input type="checkbox"/> Rotate out of assessment (to be assessed again:) <input type="checkbox"/> Curricular change <input type="checkbox"/> Pedagogic change <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment Process change <input type="checkbox"/> Benchmark change <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
	Assessment Data-Driven Change	<p>Planned Implementation Date: Provide date on which change(s) will be made based on data for this SLO.</p> <p>Beginning May 2014</p>
Closing the Loop	Acknowledgement	<p>Provide signature of Department Chair acknowledging above results.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Date</p>
	Acknowledgement	<p>Provide signature of College committee chairperson or College Dean acknowledging above results.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Date</p>

Student Learning Outcome	Student Learning Outcome	<p>A Student Learning Outcomes is a specific and measurable indicator of student progress toward a program goal(s).</p> <p>OUTCOME 3: Students obtaining the Master of Arts degree in Spanish will demonstrate higher-level critical thinking skills in areas such as evaluation, synthesis, and analysis of literature, linguistics, and cultural discourse.</p>
	Related Program Goal(s)	<p>State the program goal addressed by this Student Learning Outcome. A “SLO” may address a single goal or multiple goals.</p> <p>Goal 3: Students will demonstrate higher-level critical thinking skills in their work.</p>
	Assessment Activity	<p>State the activity that will be directly assessed for the above Student Learning Outcome.</p> <p>Students will demonstrate higher-level critical thinking skills in areas such as evaluation, synthesis, and analysis of literature, linguistics, and cultural discourse in the following activities: M.A. thesis (when applicable), oral comprehensive exam, written comprehensive exam, a portfolio of research papers.</p>
	Assessment Method	<p>Explain how the quality of the above activity will be assessed.</p> <p>Spanish M.A. Comprehensive Examination and Portfolio Assessment Rubric (see below)</p>
	Benchmark	<p>State the performance expectation for the above activity, and some justification for that expectation.</p> <p>_____ % of the graduating students will rate “acceptable” on Criterion 3 in the M.A. Assessment Rubric used to assess M.A. graduates. (This is a new assessment and benchmarks have not yet been established.)</p>
	Location	<p>State whom will be assessed using the above activity AND where it will occur.</p> <p>All Spanish M.A. candidates will undergo a ninety-minute oral comprehensive exam in Spanish in an appropriate room or office in Irby Hall</p> <p>All Spanish M.A. candidates will undergo at least nine hours of written comprehensive exams in Spanish in an appropriate room or office in Irby Hall</p> <p>All Spanish M.A. candidates will submit their writing portfolio by the end of the semester in which they complete their comprehensive examinations.</p>
	Frequency	<p>State when AND how frequently the above activity will be assessed.</p> <p>Spanish M.A. students take the Master’s Comprehensive Examinations during the semester following completion of all course work. The Spanish graduate division first provides the candidate with the date of the written exam, which takes place during two days in the second month of classes (February or October). After the written exam is completed and passed, a date will be set for the oral exam, usually the last Friday of the semester before final exams.</p>
Observations	Data Summary	<p>Provide a short summary of the results of the above activity AND the date these results were compiled.</p> <p>Data does not yet exist.</p>

Analysis	Result	<input type="checkbox"/> Exceeded <input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Did Not Meet The benchmark for this activity (stated above).
	Responsible Authority Analysis	<p>Authority Responsible for Analysis: Provide the position of the person responsible for the program.</p> <p>Graduate Coordinator</p> <p>Date of Analysis: Provide the date on which Responsible Authority reviewed data</p> <p>By June 1 of each year</p> <p>Comments: Provide comments about data from Responsible Authority</p>
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	Conclusion	<input type="checkbox"/> Continue to assess next assessment period <input type="checkbox"/> Rotate out of assessment (to be assessed again:) <input type="checkbox"/> Curricular change <input type="checkbox"/> Pedagogic change <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment Process change <input type="checkbox"/> Benchmark change <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
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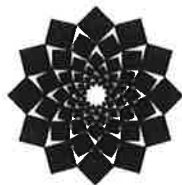
Student Learning Outcome	Student Learning Outcome	<p>A Student Learning Outcomes is a specific and measurable indicator of student progress toward a program goal(s).</p> <p>OUTCOME 4: Students obtaining the Master of Arts degree in Spanish will demonstrate competence in using MLA style conventions and appropriate research methods.</p>
	Related Program Goal(s)	<p>State the program goal addressed by this Student Learning Outcome. A “SLO” may address a single goal or multiple goals.</p> <p>Goal 4: Students will demonstrate knowledge of research methods and resources.</p>
	Assessment Activity	<p>State the activity that will be directly assessed for the above Student Learning Outcome.</p> <p>Students will demonstrate knowledge of research methods and resources, as well as some methodologies relevant to their areas of interest in the following activities: MA thesis (when applicable), oral comprehensive exam, written comprehensive exam, a portfolio of course papers.</p>
	Assessment Method	<p>Explain how the quality of the above activity will be assessed.</p> <p>Spanish M.A. Comprehensive Examination and Portfolio Assessment Rubric (see below)</p>
	Benchmark	<p>State the performance expectation for the above activity, and some justification for that expectation.</p> <p>_____ % of the graduating students will rate “acceptable” on Criterion 4 in the M.A. Assessment Rubric used to assess M.A. graduates. (This is a new assessment and benchmarks have not yet been established.)</p>
	Location	<p>State whom will be assessed using the above activity AND where it will occur.</p> <p>All Spanish M.A. candidates will undergo a ninety-minute oral comprehensive exam in Spanish in an appropriate room or office in Irby Hall</p> <p>All Spanish M.A. candidates will undergo at least nine hours of written comprehensive exams in Spanish in an appropriate room or office in Irby Hall</p> <p>All Spanish M.A. candidates will submit their writing portfolio by the end of the semester in which they complete their comprehensive examinations.</p>
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Analysis	Responsible Authority Analysis	<p>Authority Responsible for Analysis: Provide the position of the person responsible for the program.</p> <p>Graduate Coordinator</p> <p>Date of Analysis: Provide the date on which Responsible Authority reviewed data</p> <p>By June 1 of each year</p> <p>Comments: Provide comments about data from Responsible Authority</p>
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Spanish MA Comprehensive Examination and Assessment Rubric

Elements	Unacceptable (Approaches Standard) 1 pt.	Acceptable (Meets Standard) 2 pts.	Target (Exceeds Standard) 3 pts.
Criterion 1 Spanish Language Proficiencies	Candidate does not demonstrate an advanced-high level of proficiency as described in ACTFL guidelines in one or more of the four skills.	Candidate demonstrates an advanced-high level of proficiency as described in ACTFL guidelines in all four skills.	Candidate demonstrates at least a superior level of proficiency as described in ACTFL guidelines in at least one skill with advanced-high proficiency in all.
Criterion 2 Advanced knowledge of the literatures, cultures, linguistics, and civilizations of the Spanish-speaking world.	Candidate is aware of some major literary works and has read excerpts, abridgements, or reviews of those works and authors. Candidate makes few relevant connections between different concepts, time periods, cultures, and literatures. Candidate's grasp of the history of the Spanish language and linguistic principles is limited.	Candidate interprets literary and cultural texts that represent defining works in M.A. Reading list. Candidate identifies themes, authors, historical style, and genres in a variety of contexts. Candidate is able to make relevant connections between different concepts, time periods, cultures, and literatures. Candidate discusses the Spanish language from pertinent diachronic and synchronic linguistic perspectives.	Candidate interprets and synthesizes ideas and critical issues from literary, linguistic, and other cultural works that represent the historical and contemporary products of a wide range of artists in a wide range of genres beyond those found in the M.A. reading list. Candidate interprets them from multiple viewpoints and approaches. Candidate makes wide use of linguistic principles applicable to Spanish.
Criterion 3 Demonstrate higher-level critical thinking skills in areas such as evaluation, synthesis, and analysis of literature, linguistics, and cultural discourse.	Candidate cites examples of cultural/literary practices and perspectives that demonstrate an elementary or undergraduate level of understanding. Ability to discuss M.A. reading list shows little breadth or depth.	Candidate cites key cultural and linguistic perspectives, provides support through description of a wide range of examples, and demonstrates the ability to analyze and hypothesize about important cultural, linguistic, and literary issues.	Candidate views the target cultures of the Spanish-speaking world through a cultural framework that organizes and analyzes profound cultural, linguistic, and literary traditions from a wide variety of sources beyond the M.A. reading list and coursework.
Criterion 4 Demonstrate knowledge of research methods and resources, as well as some methodologies relevant to their areas of interest.	Candidate's writing portfolio shows consistent failure to use MLA conventions and/or appropriate research methodologies.	Candidate's writing portfolio shows consistent knowledge and use of MLA conventions as well as appropriate research resources and methodologies.	Candidate's writing portfolio shows consistent knowledge and control of MLA conventions and a diverse range of appropriate research methodologies and resources.

ACTFL
**PROFICIENCY
GUIDELINES**
2012



ACTFL

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General Preface

to the **ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012**

The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines are descriptions of what individuals can do with language in terms of speaking, writing, listening, and reading in real-world situations in a spontaneous and non-rehearsed context. For each skill, these guidelines identify five major levels of proficiency: Distinguished, Superior, Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice. The major levels Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice are subdivided into High, Mid, and Low sublevels. The levels of the ACTFL Guidelines describe the continuum of proficiency from that of the highly articulate, well-educated language user to a level of little or no functional ability.

These Guidelines present the levels of proficiency as ranges, and describe what an individual can and cannot do with language at each level, regardless of where, when, or how the language was acquired. Together these levels form a hierarchy in which each level subsumes all lower levels. The Guidelines are not based on any particular theory, pedagogical method, or educational curriculum. They neither describe how an individual learns a language nor prescribe how an individual should learn a language, and they should not be used for such purposes. They are an instrument for the evaluation of functional language ability.

The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines were first published in 1986 as an adaptation for the academic community of the U.S. Government's Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) Skill Level Descriptions. This third edition of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines includes the first revisions of Listening and Reading since their original publication in 1986, and a second revision of the ACTFL Speaking and Writing Guidelines, which were revised to reflect real-world assessment needs in 1999 and 2001 respectively. New for the 2012 edition are the addition of the major level of Distinguished to the Speaking and Writing Guidelines, the division of the Advanced level into the three sublevels of High, Mid, and Low for the Listening and Reading Guidelines, and the addition of a general level description at the Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice levels for all skills.

Another new feature of the 2012 Guidelines is their publication online, supported with glossed terminology and annotated, multimedia samples of performance at each level for Speaking and Writing, and examples of oral and written texts and tasks associated with each level for Reading and Listening.

The direct application of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines is for the evaluation of functional language ability. The Guidelines are intended to be used for global assessment in academic and workplace settings. However, the Guidelines do have instructional implications. The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines underlie the development of the ACTFL Performance Guidelines for K-12 Learners (1998) and are used in conjunction with the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning (1996, 1998, 2006) to describe how well students meet content standards. For the past 25 years, the ACTFL Guidelines have had an increasingly profound impact on language teaching and learning in the United States.

ACTFL PROFICIENCY GUIDELINES 2012 — SPEAKING

Preface

The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012 – Speaking describe five major levels of proficiency: Distinguished, Superior, Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice. The description of each major level is representative of a specific range of abilities. Together these levels form a hierarchy in which each level subsumes all lower levels. The major levels Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice are divided into High, Mid, and Low sublevels.

The Guidelines describe the tasks that speakers can handle at each level, as well as the content, context, accuracy, and discourse types associated with tasks at each level. They also present the limits that

speakers encounter when attempting to function at the next higher major level.

These Guidelines can be used to evaluate speech that is either Interpersonal (interactive, two-way communication) or Presentational (one-way, non-interactive).

The written descriptions of speaking proficiency are accompanied online by speech samples illustrating the features of each major level.

The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012 – Speaking may be used for non-profit, educational purposes only, provided that they are reproduced in their entirety, with no alterations, and with credit to ACTFL.

DISTINGUISHED

Speakers at the Distinguished level are able to use language skillfully, and with accuracy, efficiency, and effectiveness. They are educated and articulate users of the language. They can reflect on a wide range of global issues and highly abstract concepts in a culturally appropriate manner. Distinguished-level speakers can use persuasive and hypothetical discourse for representational purposes, allowing them to advocate a point of view that is not necessarily their own. They can tailor language to a variety of audiences by adapting their speech and register in ways that are culturally authentic.

Speakers at the Distinguished level produce highly sophisticated and tightly organized extended discourse. At the same time, they can speak succinctly, often using cultural and historical references to allow them to say less and mean more. At this level, oral discourse typically resembles written discourse.

A non-native accent, a lack of a native-like economy of expression, a limited control of deeply embedded cultural references, and/or an occasional isolated language error may still be present at this level.

ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012 – SPEAKING

SUPERIOR

Speakers at the Superior level are able to communicate with accuracy and fluency in order to participate fully and effectively in conversations on a variety of topics in formal and informal settings from both concrete and abstract perspectives. They discuss their interests and special fields of competence, explain complex matters in detail, and provide lengthy and coherent narrations, all with ease, fluency, and accuracy. They present their opinions on a number of issues of interest to them, such as social and political issues, and provide structured arguments to support these opinions. They are able to construct and develop hypotheses to explore alternative possibilities.

When appropriate, these speakers use extended discourse without unnaturally lengthy hesitation to make their point, even when engaged in abstract elaborations. Such discourse, while coherent, may still be influenced by language patterns other than those of the target language. Superior-level speakers employ a variety of interactive and discourse strategies, such as turn-taking and separating main ideas from supporting information through the use of syntactic, lexical, and phonetic devices.

Speakers at the Superior level demonstrate no pattern of error in the use of basic structures, although they may make sporadic errors, particularly in low-frequency structures and in complex high-frequency structures. Such errors, if they do occur, do not distract the native interlocutor or interfere with communication.

ADVANCED

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.

Advanced High

Speakers at the Advanced High sublevel perform all Advanced-level tasks with linguistic ease, confidence, and competence. They are consistently able to explain in detail and narrate fully and accurately in all time frames. In addition, Advanced High speakers handle the tasks pertaining to the Superior level but cannot sustain performance at that level across a variety of topics. They may provide a structured argument to support their opinions, and they may construct hypotheses, but patterns of error appear. They can discuss some topics abstractly, especially those relating to their particular interests and special fields of expertise, but in general, they are more comfortable discussing a variety of topics concretely.

Advanced High speakers may demonstrate 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. They use precise vocabulary and intonation to express meaning and often show great fluency and ease of speech. However, when called on to perform the complex tasks associated with the Superior level over a variety of topics, their language will at times break down or prove inadequate, or they may avoid the task altogether, for example, by resorting to simplification through the use of description or narration in place of argument or hypothesis.

Advanced Mid

Speakers at the Advanced Mid sublevel are able to handle with ease and confidence a large number of communicative tasks. They 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.

Advanced Mid speakers demonstrate the ability to narrate and describe in the major time frames of past, present, and future by providing a full account, with good control of aspect. Narration and description tend to be combined and interwoven to relate relevant and supporting facts in connected, paragraph-length discourse.

Advanced Mid speakers 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 with which they are otherwise familiar. Communicative strategies such as circumlocution or rephrasing are often employed for this purpose. The speech of Advanced Mid speakers performing Advanced-level tasks is marked by substantial flow. Their vocabulary is fairly extensive although primarily generic in nature, except in the case of a particular area of specialization or interest. Their discourse may still reflect the oral paragraph structure of their own language rather than that of the target language.

Advanced Mid speakers contribute to conversations on a variety of familiar topics, dealt with concretely, with much accuracy, clarity and precision, and they convey their intended message without misrepresentation or confusion. They are readily understood by native speakers unaccustomed to dealing with non-natives. When called on to perform functions or handle topics associated with the Superior level, the quality and/or quantity of their speech will generally decline.

Advanced Low

Speakers at the Advanced Low sublevel are able to handle a variety of communicative tasks. They are able to participate in most informal and some formal conversations on topics related to school, home, and leisure activities. They can also speak about some topics related to employment, current events, and matters of public and community interest.

Advanced Low speakers 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. In these narrations and descriptions, Advanced Low speakers combine and link sentences into connected discourse of paragraph length, although these narrations and descriptions tend to be handled separately rather than interwoven. They can handle appropriately the essential linguistic challenges presented by a complication or an unexpected turn of events.

Responses produced by Advanced Low speakers are typically not longer than a single paragraph. The speaker's dominant language may be evident in the use of false cognates, literal translations, or the oral paragraph structure of that language. At times their discourse may be minimal for the level, marked by an irregular flow, and containing noticeable self-correction. More generally, the performance of Advanced Low speakers tends to be uneven.

Advanced Low speech is typically marked by a certain grammatical roughness (e.g., inconsistent control of verb endings), but the overall performance of the Advanced-level tasks is sustained, albeit minimally. The vocabulary of Advanced Low speakers often lacks specificity. Nevertheless, Advanced Low speakers are able to use communicative strategies such as rephrasing and circumlocution.

Advanced Low speakers contribute to the conversation with sufficient accuracy, clarity, and precision to convey their intended message without misrepresentation or confusion. Their speech can be understood by native speakers unaccustomed to dealing with non-natives, even though this may require some repetition or restatement. When attempting to perform functions or handle topics associated with the Superior level, the linguistic quality and quantity of their speech will deteriorate significantly.

ACTFL PROFICIENCY GUIDELINES 2012 — WRITING

Preface

The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012 – Writing describe five major levels of proficiency: Distinguished, Superior, Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice. The description of each major level is representative of a specific range of abilities. Together these levels form a hierarchy in which each level subsumes all lower levels. The major levels Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice are divided into High, Mid, and Low sublevels.

The Guidelines describe the tasks that writers can handle at each level as well as the content, context, accuracy, and discourse types associated with the writing tasks at each level. They also present the limits that writers encounter when attempting to function at the next higher major level.

These Guidelines can be used to describe written text that is either Presentational (essays, reports, letters) or Interpersonal (instant messaging, e-mail communication, texting). Moreover, they apply to writing that is spontaneous (immediate, unedited) or reflective (revised, edited). This is possible because the Guidelines describe the product rather than the process or purpose of the writing.

The written descriptions of writing proficiency are accompanied online by writing samples illustrating the features of each major level.

The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012 – Writing may be used for non-profit, educational purposes only, provided that they are reproduced in their entirety, with no alterations, and with credit to ACTFL.

ADVANCED

Writers at the Advanced level are characterized by the ability to write routine informal and some formal correspondence, as well as narratives, descriptions, and summaries of a factual nature. They can narrate and describe in the major time frames of past, present, and future, using paraphrasing and elaboration to provide clarity. Advanced-level writers produce connected discourse of paragraph length and structure. At this level, writers show good control of the most frequently used structures and generic vocabulary, allowing them to be understood by those unaccustomed to the writing of non-natives.

Advanced High

Writers at the Advanced High sublevel are able to write about a variety of topics with significant precision and detail. They can handle informal and formal correspondence according to appropriate conventions. They can write summaries and reports of a factual nature. They can also write extensively about topics relating to particular interests and special areas of competence, although their writing tends to emphasize the concrete aspects of such topics. Advanced High writers can narrate and describe in the major time frames, with solid control of aspect. In addition, they are able to demonstrate the ability to handle writing tasks associated with the Superior level, such as developing arguments and constructing hypotheses, but are not able to do this all of the time; they cannot produce Superior-level writing consistently across a variety of topics treated abstractly or generally. They have good control of a range of grammatical structures and a fairly wide general vocabulary. When writing at the Advanced level, they often show remarkable ease of expression, but under the demands of Superior-level writing tasks, patterns of error appear. The linguistic limitations of Advanced High writing may occasionally distract the native reader from the message.

Advanced Mid

Writers at the Advanced Mid sublevel are able to meet a range of work and/or academic writing needs. They demonstrate the ability to narrate and describe with detail in all major time frames with good control of aspect. They are able to write straightforward summaries on topics of general interest. Their writing exhibits a variety of cohesive devices in texts up to several paragraphs in length. There is good control of the most frequently used target-language syntactic structures and a range of general vocabulary. Most often, thoughts are expressed clearly and supported by some elaboration. This writing incorporates organizational features both of the target language and the writer's first language and may at times resemble oral discourse. Writing at the Advanced Mid sublevel is understood readily by natives not used to the writing of non-natives. When called on to perform functions or to treat issues at the Superior level, Advanced Mid writers will manifest a decline in the quality and/or quantity of their writing.

Advanced Low

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.

ACTFL PROFICIENCY GUIDELINES 2012 — LISTENING

Preface

The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012 – Listening

describe five major levels of proficiency: Distinguished, Superior, Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice. The description of each major level is representative of a specific range of abilities. Together these levels form a hierarchy in which each level subsumes all lower levels. The major levels Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice are divided into High, Mid, and Low sublevels. The subdivision of the Advanced Level into High, Mid, and Low is new. This makes the Listening descriptions parallel to the other skill-level descriptions.

Listening is an interpretive skill. Listening comprehension is based largely on the amount of information listeners can retrieve from what they hear and the inferences and connections that they can make. By describing the tasks that listeners can perform with different types of oral texts and under different types of circumstances, the Listening Proficiency Guidelines describe how listeners understand oral discourse. The Guidelines do not describe how listening skills develop, how one learns to listen, nor the actual cognitive processes involved in the activity. Rather, they are intended to describe what listeners understand from what they hear.

These Guidelines apply to listening that is either Interpretive (non-participative, overheard) or Interpersonal (participative).

The written descriptions of listening proficiency are accompanied online by authentic speech samples and the functional listening tasks associated with each major level.

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ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012 – LISTENING

ADVANCED

At the Advanced level, listeners can understand the main ideas and most supporting details in connected discourse on a variety of general interest topics, such as news stories, explanations, instructions, anecdotes, or travelogue descriptions. Listeners are able to compensate for limitations in their lexical and structural control of the language by using real-world knowledge and contextual clues. Listeners may also derive some meaning from oral texts at higher levels if they possess significant familiarity with the topic or context.

Advanced-level listeners understand speech that is authentic and connected. This speech is lexically and structurally uncomplicated. The discourse is straightforward and is generally organized in a clear and predictable way.

Advanced-level listeners demonstrate the ability to comprehend language on a range of topics of general interest. They have sufficient knowledge of language structure to understand basic time-frame references. Nevertheless, their understanding is most often limited to concrete, conventional discourse.

Advanced High

At the Advanced High sublevel, listeners are 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. They are typically able to follow some of the essential points of more complex or argumentative speech in areas of special interest or knowledge. In addition, they are able to derive some meaning from oral texts that deal with unfamiliar topics or situations. At the Advanced High sublevel, listeners are able to comprehend the facts presented in oral discourse and are often able to recognize speaker-intended inferences. Nevertheless, there are likely to be gaps in comprehension of complex texts dealing with issues treated abstractly that are typically understood by Superior-level listeners.

Advanced Mid

At the Advanced Mid sublevel, listeners are 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. The speech is predominantly in familiar target-language patterns. Listeners understand 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 Low

At the Advanced Low sublevel, listeners are able to understand short conventional narrative and descriptive texts with a clear underlying structure though their comprehension may be uneven. The listener understands the main facts and some supporting details. Comprehension may often derive primarily from situational and subject-matter knowledge.

ACTFL PROFICIENCY GUIDELINES 2012 — READING

Preface

The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012 – Reading describe five major levels of proficiency: Distinguished, Superior, Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice. The description of each major level is representative of a specific range of abilities. Together these levels form a hierarchy in which each level subsumes all lower levels. The major levels Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice are divided into High, Mid, and Low sublevels. The subdivision of the Advanced level is new. This makes the Reading descriptions parallel to the other skill level descriptions.

Reading is an interpretive skill. Reading comprehension is based largely on the amount of information readers can retrieve from a text, and the inferences and connections that they can make within and across texts. By describing the tasks that readers can perform with different types of texts and under different types of circumstances, the Reading Proficiency Guidelines describe how readers understand written texts. These Guidelines do not describe how reading skills develop, how one learns to read, nor the actual cognitive processes involved in the activity of reading. Rather, they are intended to describe what readers are able to understand from what they read.

These Guidelines apply to reading that is either Interpretive (books, essays, reports, etc.) or Interpersonal (instant messaging, texting, email communication, etc.).

The written descriptions of reading proficiency are accompanied online by authentic text samples and the functional reading tasks associated with each major level.

The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012 – Reading may be used for non-profit, educational purposes only, provided that they are reproduced in their entirety, with no alterations, and with credit to ACTFL.

ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012 – **READING**

ADVANCED

At the Advanced level, readers can understand the main idea and supporting details of authentic narrative and descriptive texts. Readers are able to compensate for limitations in their lexical and structural knowledge by using contextual clues. Comprehension is likewise supported by knowledge of the conventions of the language (e.g., noun/adjective agreement, verb placement, etc.). When familiar with the subject matter, Advanced-level readers are also able to derive some meaning from straightforward argumentative texts (e.g., recognizing the main argument).

Advanced-level readers are able to understand texts that have a clear and predictable structure. For the most part, the prose is uncomplicated and the subject matter pertains to real-world topics of general interest.

Advanced-level readers demonstrate an independence in their ability to read subject matter that is new to them. They have sufficient control of standard linguistic conventions to understand sequencing, time frames, and chronology. However, these readers are likely challenged by texts in which issues are treated abstractly.

Advanced High

At the Advanced High sublevel, readers are able to understand, fully and with ease, conventional narrative and descriptive texts of any length as well as more complex factual material. They are able to follow some of the essential points of argumentative texts in areas of special interest or knowledge. In addition, they are able to understand parts of texts that deal with unfamiliar topics or situations. These readers are able to go beyond comprehension of the facts in a text, and to begin to recognize author-intended inferences. An emerging awareness of the aesthetic properties of language and of its literary styles permits comprehension of a wide variety of texts. Misunderstandings may occur when reading texts that are structurally and/or conceptually more complex.

Advanced Mid

At the Advanced Mid sublevel, readers are 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. These texts reflect the standard linguistic conventions of the written form of the language in such a way that readers can predict what they are going to read. Readers understand the main ideas, facts, and many supporting details. Comprehension derives not only from situational and subject-matter knowledge but also from knowledge of the language itself. Readers at this level may derive some meaning from texts that are structurally and/or conceptually more complex.

Advanced Low

At the Advanced Low sublevel, readers are able to understand conventional narrative and descriptive texts with a clear underlying structure though their comprehension may be uneven. These texts predominantly contain high-frequency vocabulary and structures. Readers understand the main ideas and some supporting details. Comprehension may often derive primarily from situational and subject-matter knowledge. Readers at this level will be challenged to comprehend more complex texts.