

Academic Department Strategic Plan

1 May 2009

Final Plan

DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES, LITERATURES AND CULTURES

Section 1 Department Description

I. Mission, Vision, and Goals

The department consists of 13 Tenured or Tenure-Track Faculty, 1 full time adjunct faculty member, 1 native speaking teaching assistant, and 2 staff members. We have 57 majors, 50 minors, and last fall 531 students were enrolled in our classes.

Mission

The Faculty of the Department of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures has as its core mission to develop the student's understanding of the foreign culture and civilization through training in listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing in the target language. In so doing, the department reaffirms the academic tradition that recognizes the value of transmitting knowledge in languages other than English.

Vision

All Gustavus Adolphus College students take four semesters of language through the level of 202 to reach a level of "minimum proficiency" in all linguistic skills in the target language. These students participate in a study abroad program in the target language and culture.

Major/minor

MLC offers majors and minors in French and Spanish, and in Japanese Studies, and majors in Russian Language and Area Studies. Changes concerning the German major and minor are currently under consideration by the faculty.

Advising

Students select an advisor from among the tenured or tenure-track faculty in each language section. In some cases, Spanish, for example, this selection may occur based on an area of interest within the program, i.e., linguistics, Peninsular or Spanish-American studies. Students work with the advisor to plan a program of study, select a study abroad site, seek graduate studies advising, or other academic topics.

Study abroad

All majors and minors are encouraged to spend a minimum of one semester studying in an approved program that the student selects in consultation with his/her advisor and the Center for International and Cultural Education. Students choose the area based on academic interests, internship possibilities, and program reputation. A number of courses are selected in consultation with the advisor, and some of these assist students in progressing toward successful completion of the major. In addition, the abroad experience is envisioned as a rich cultural component in the student's study program at the College. To this end the Department works to prepare students for

the experience abroad both through course work completed before study abroad (culture courses are a key component), web sites prepared for this purpose in the Culpeper Center by faculty, the director, and returning students. Students are expected to fulfill specific cultural and linguistic obligations while abroad, and are required to return with specific knowledge and experiences acquired during the stay overseas. Upon returning, students are expected to share the knowledge/experiences with the Gustavus community of students/faculty through presentations, portfolios, and course expectations. This experience serves as an important part of the senior portfolio that students complete before exiting the program.

Teacher education program

Spanish works in connection with the Education department to prepare students for the teaching profession and certification by the State. Students in this program gain important linguistic and cultural expertise by studying abroad, in addition to completing the major. The Department oversees the instruction of the language teaching methodology course. Students gain additional experience by serving as language tutors in the Department and by working closely with faculty members in the student employment program.

Student employment

This college-wide program enables our students to work closely with faculty members and gain important insights into the teaching and academic profession. Faculty request specific students from those qualified for financial aid. In addition, students may have the opportunity to assist in the language center and gain valuable computer skills, in addition to learning applications of technology to language learning.

Tutorial program

Each language section runs an in-house tutorial program overseen by a faculty member and staffed by student assistants with the help of the language assistant. Here students can receive peer assistance, as well as have the opportunity to learn teaching skills by working with their peers in a tutorial situation. Faculty members conduct occasional tutorials for the tutors to offer help in explaining language topics.

Language assistant program

On a yearly rotating basis, French, German, and Spanish respectively hosts a native speaker from abroad. The Assistant spends an academic year living among the student community and assisting the language program. Assistants oversee cultural activities such as film series, cultural talks, language tables, conversation periods, and work with the tutorial program to help language learners. In addition, assistants work with faculty in the classroom.

Culpeper Center

The Center is a key link in many of the above activities. Here students have access to all digital materials used in courses: oral language, visuals, films, and WWW sites. Students record podcasts, participate in oral chat sessions, and write assignments here with the assistance of language specific software. The Center assists in the preparation of students for the abroad experience with country specific cultural and linguistic sites. Students use the Center to hone their listening skills by accessing WWW radiobroadcasts from the country of their choice. WWW sites are prepared by returning students to share information and experiences that are integrated into culture courses and the pre-departure preparation of other students.

Departmental Goals

The Department of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures sets goals that reflect the commonalities as well as the divergences between the different language sections. The goals of the department are consonant with its mission, and that if the College, since the department plays a vital role in the fulfillment of the college's mission of education.

Specific Goals

- To provide students with an understanding that the language of a people is an important component of its culture.
- To develop an understanding that the concept of culture embraces all aspects of the life of a people, including their arts, literature, history, and the linguistic, societal, and political processes of that people.
- To provide students with programs that guide them toward achieving proficiency in listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing.
- To provide students with programs that insure that graduates will be well prepared whatever their career decision may be.

Specifics

1. Beginning level language courses

- The goal is that students acquire basic reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills in the target language.

2. Intermediate level courses

- A higher level of linguistic and cultural competency is expected at this level. At the end of their intermediate level courses students will be able to write short essays in the target language, and contextualize language in a more complex manner. They will also read and discuss short literary, and/or other appropriate texts in the target language.

3. Advanced level composition, and composition and conversation courses

- Students will develop a higher linguistic and oral competence in the target language. They write essays in which they formulate and defend succinct arguments in the target language. They read literary and other texts and understand audiovisual materials in the target language. Their understanding of cultural issues should be such to allow them to maintain a conversation on sophisticated topics.

4. Advanced courses for majors and minors

- The students' linguistic, literary and cultural competency in the target language will allow them to interact more fluently with native speakers. They will also be able to analyze well a literary text, and have a basic knowledge of the historical and cultural context of the author and his/her work. Basic literary methods and linguistic theories are used in analyzing literary texts.

II. MLC PROGRAMS

Sections

- French
- German
- Japanese Studies
- Russian Language and Area Studies
- Spanish

III. Support relationships

Our department relies on the Culpeper Center for the technology support indispensable to our teaching. As identified in the section concerning the Center, composed by Shirley Nieto.

All sections rely on the Center for International and Cultural Education for our study abroad programs.

The following interdisciplinary programs collaborate in key courses:

- Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies
- Japanese Studies
- Latin American, Latino, and Caribbean Studies
- Russian Language and Area Studies

Section 2 - Strategic Review

1. External Environment Analysis:

From your own sources of information (external reviews, senior surveys, assessment data, etc.) look for trends-what is going on now and how this relates to past trends that have influenced your department's decisions about curriculum, staffing, student activities, connections to other programs, etc. With this information in mind, list key opportunities and threats for each of the following environmental sectors:

A. What trends within your discipline influence your department?

French Section

- In the 1990s, the French literature program switched from a focus on different centuries to a curriculum that integrates culture, politics, gender issues of colonialism and post colonialism, and power relations as portrayed in literature. We took cue from student's interests that were changing as well as curricula from other institutions.
- The use of technology has enhanced language learning and influences our approach to teaching at any level of our courses. Having the Culpeper Center provides an opportunity for learning new ways to integrate technology into the teaching of language and culture. Such a tool helps students to understand contemporary events and issues in Francophone Countries as they shape the contemporary debate (For instance in France, among the topics are the recent law regarding religious symbols and clothing in schools, the 2005 riots and their social purpose, the tension created by immigration issues, and the laws ensuing).
- As a recent study by the MLA shows, literature is not the only paradigm for a language program anymore. This is what our students have also told us for the last 10 years. The French section just reviewed its curriculum to pursue the main objectives of the 2001 program, strengthening in particular its offerings in francophone culture and recent French history and arts.
- The existence of a language requirement in most institutions of Liberal Arts has led us to establish such a prerequisite. It has meant that occasionally we have students taking French who would otherwise have taken another language. This offers new challenges for our French program and the possibility to attract more students who will continue with the study of a language they might not have otherwise chosen. We intend to maintain this opportunity to encourage the study of French in MLC.

Spanish Section

- The Spanish program changed its curriculum in 1995 to reflect trends towards increased interest in language and culture by our students. We cut some literature courses in order to add Linguistics, Advanced Grammar, Film, and Special Topics. The trends -- noted above by the French program -- towards a curriculum that integrates culture, politics, and gender issues, has not been lost on the Spanish section. We are currently considering the ways in which we could increase our offerings in culture and language, without diminishing studies in literature. One of the most exciting -- and challenging -- trends in Spanish has been the need for courses for Heritage speakers (students who have grown up in bilingual households, but who have either very limited or no formal training in Spanish). These students often speak well within a limited context: they do not understand how to modulate their Spanish for an academic setting, and they often write very poorly in Spanish. These students also point to a need for courses in Latino culture.

Japanese

- In recent years, many Japanese language and literature programs across the country have moved to the direction of Cultural Studies, especially film and popular culture. By offering a variety of courses in language, literature, culture, and film, a Japanese program can help students situate their study about Japan in a broader context. It also helps students recognize not only the complexity of culture but also different approaches to the study of culture.
- Technology enables instructors to incorporate multi-media in the classroom, such as power-point presentation, film clips, websites, pictures, and photos. The use of multi-media is important for teaching about Japanese literature and culture because it helps the instructor present the material faster and more effectively. It also stimulates students' interest and enables them to focus much better than the traditional lecture-teaching mode.
- Like other languages, more Japanese language/culture departments/programs seem to be shifting their emphasis from literature in the traditional sense to a more inclusive concept of "culture."

What opportunities do those trends present?

- Such trends create opportunities for being more innovative in creating new courses in areas that we, as professors, did not specialize in. Keeping abreast with evolution in our field of Francophone studies give us an opportunity to be intellectually and culturally engaged in a globalized lens so that our students turn with us looking to the world rather than their own country. Students understand better the purpose of a liberal arts education when they link their knowledge to the world.
- The present trends give our French courses an interdisciplinary aspect, which should be the greatest basis for the future of education in any institution of higher learning. These trends create an opportunity for our students to make relevant connections between different disciplines in which they have taken courses: a truly liberal arts approach to educating our students
- We have more Spanish-native speakers on campus that add to the student body diversity, and contribute greatly to the diversity of our Spanish classes. These students bring first-hand into our program issues that directly relate to Latinos in the US.
- The availability of abundant visual materials about Japan has greatly enhanced the teaching about Japanese culture. By using documentary films about important topics on Japanese culture, such as festivals, religion and youth we enable students to "see" Japanese culture first hand so that they can relate to certain aspects of Japanese culture in a more concrete way.
- Students are often exposed to certain Japanese media products before they enter college. It is

often the case that their previous experience with Japanese popular culture becomes their incentive to study Japanese language. This provides an opportunity for the teacher to encourage students to develop their knowledge about Japan and to explore Japanese culture in depth.

- Such a broad concept of Japanese culture would allow Dr. Shan and Dr. Sakuragi to incorporate their various scholarly interests into their courses from both humanistic (Shan) and social scientific (Sakuragi) perspectives.

What threats do they present?

- The trend followed by our section in the 1990s, is that our new approach to teaching French has helped us drive more interest for French on the part of students, there are drawbacks. There is something important missing in a students' education when they are not exposed to all forms of literature (novel, theater, and poetry) as was the case in our curriculum before. Immersing themselves in literary studies enables students to get a better grasp of French language and culture than the present generation of students seems to appreciate. Poetry and theater are more spontaneous forms of spoken language that can be acquired and developed better in courses that address directly these subjects, more than prose would for instance.
- The situation in Spanish is similar to the one for the French.
- However we recognize that our courses do not meet the needs of the increasing number of heritage speakers.

B. What social trends influence your department?

- Economic trends and students' perception of priorities influence how we assess our curricula. For instance, the increasing interest in Francophone societies that we have noticed in our students could be explained by a general trend in learning more about non-western cultures. The new administration this country will experience will engage our students in a new frame of mind towards the world and a more adventurous *modus operandi* in reaching outside their North American borders. For example in the study abroad programs our students choose, more African countries become their destinations. During the past four years, we have seen more French majors go to Madagascar, and it is a pleasure how they apply, upon their return, a more globalized approach to their analysis of literature, culture and cinema. In French we also have a new generation of double majors different from the traditional business, art, political science, psychology and French double majors: mainly French and Environmental Studies.
- Like the rest of society, students tend to think in terms of getting a job after graduation rather than How a liberal arts education will serve them in finding a profession that will satisfy them and give them the tools to be more grounded social beings. Most of our students do not go onto graduate programs in French and Francophone studies. That explains in part their dropping interest in literature as a discipline as most of them cannot see its immediate necessity in their future career. They perceive their major or minor in French as a good combination with political science or international management.
- In the case of Spanish, the demographic growth of the Hispanic population in the US in the last decades has driven some important trends in our discipline. Students in general think that Spanish will be useful for their careers, and will make them more competitive in the job market. Also, many students choose to study Spanish because it allows them to be better citizens of the society they live in. Students contemplating a career in health care, government service, business, law or a field where communicating with other people is important tend to think that knowing Spanish is a great asset. Students commonly double major in Spanish and Business Management, International Management, Education, Nursing, Biology (pre-med), Political Science, Communication Studies, Psychology, Sociology, or English.

- We have observed two major trends that have positively influenced the enrollment in Japanese language courses: increasing interest in Japanese pop culture (particularly anime) and an increasing number of Asian-American students on our campus and more generally in Minnesota.

What opportunities do those trends present?

- The social trends have created a renewed interest in what we want to teach our students and what we would like them to integrate in their education and their life as responsible citizens of the world in the case of our department.
- These are: the importance of being educated about foreign cultures; study abroad programs beyond the boundaries of Europe, (as mentioned above studying in Francophone Africa); applying for Fulbright fellowships and other fellowships for the past five years (two of our students with French majors have received such awards in the past two years and have gone to Morocco).
- Such trends reflect what we believe is the quality of what we teach and the general growing interest in Francophone countries combined with our effort to spread that interest.
- As professors, we have made it our challenge to take students to countries where they might have never gone before. For instance, Professor Gronhøvd is mapping a program abroad for a semester in Morocco, Tunisia and Turkey. This is the result of three summers spent doing research in these countries about democratic Islam and how literature of the Maghreb fits in such a political context.
- These social demands provide the Spanish program with a high volume of students. The high demand from businesses, healthcare providers, and social services to attend to the increasing Hispanic population in the US, plus the increased investment of US based companies in Hispanic-speaking countries and the many projects non-profit organizations direct in areas of the world where Spanish is spoken, have led many universities and colleges to offer specialized classes such as Business Spanish, Medical Spanish, or Service Learning in the Latino Community. The growth of the Hispanic population presents an opportunity to develop courses in translation and interpretation.
- We expect that these trends will continue to be important factors in drawing students into Japanese courses.

What threats do they present?

- Social trends can distract educators from focusing on things that students need to learn in a liberal arts college. The tendency on the part of students to view everything in terms of how much they can create job opportunities for them after graduating has the risk of making them think in a narrow box. It is a constant challenge to make a foreign language (especially when it is not Spanish) relevant to a well-grounded education. Especially considering that until the turn of this century the study of modern languages, or classical languages for that matter was not an integral part of the curriculum in secondary education.
- The decline of our economy, which is a threat at the present moment and for years to come, might actually redirect our priorities in the study of foreign languages in a more creative way. This would reverse the threat into an opportunity to rethink economic concepts into the framework of more favorable social conditions.
- We see some of the students in Japanese courses having too one-dimensional an interest in Japanese culture (e.g., anime).

C. What information about current and future students influences your department?

- The first immersion (Spanish and French) programs started throughout the country and more particularly in this region, in the past ten years, have changed the quality of our students who often go into a major or minor in French or Spanish. We have experienced this quality among our students in the past five years.
- The majors and minors combined with one in French gives professors a better frame for regular revisions in our curriculum.
- As noted earlier, the demographic trend (an increasing number of Asian-American students) and the students' interest in Japanese pop culture are the two important factors to consider.

What opportunities does that information present?

- Having a better profile of our students gives us the opportunity to adapt to their schedules and needs so that we can better offer courses fulfilling the language requirement and attract students majoring in other disciplines so that they can combine them with majors and minors in our programs.

What threats does that information present?

- We cannot realistically accommodate all our students schedule wise, considering that there are still departments scheduling seminars within two or three consecutive hours at any time of the day, cutting into students' opportunity to take other courses in that long time sequence reserved to one course.
- Another difficulty is to know what is trendy for students and what is realistic education.
- Placement is important as a tool to advise students on how to make the most of their education at Gustavus.

D. What information about the economy influences your department?

- Given the state of the economy we need to rely on grants to compete with other institutions.
- The economic condition may have an impact on the affordability of study in Japan.

What opportunities does that information present?

- Students are more and more asking for careers that can give them possibilities in the francophone world. This is true for Spanish as well.
- The exchange relationship we have with Kansai Gaidai will help keep the cost of study in Japan stable.

What threats does that information present?

- We can only encourage students to study abroad during their stay at Gustavus, rather than make it a requirement.
- Courses abroad are more costly for all programs.
- Excessive depreciation of dollar against yen could make the living expenses in Japan prohibitive

E. What do you know about potential funding sources that influence your department?

- Japan Foundation is the most important source. Other important sources include Freeman and Luce Foundations.
- The department turns to Bob Weisenfeld in the Office of Corporate and Foundation Relations for funding ideas and grants. For instance, this Spring, William Teipe (Spanish Section) will be meeting with Bob Weisenfeld to discuss ways in which Dr. Teipe can assist in doing grant writing, and obtaining funding for the College and Faculty's future research projects.

What opportunities does that information present?

- We had funding for the Culpeper Language Center.
- We have had successful applications to Japan Foundation.

What threats does that information present?

- Gustavus broke its institutional promise to Japan Foundation by eliminating the position created with Japan Foundation Grant several years ago.

F. What do you know about competing educational institutions and how does that information influence your department?

- We look the curriculum of other institutions and their programs influence how we assess the effectiveness of our own program and its authenticity in a globalized context. We gathered information from Macalester, Carleton, Bard and Bowdoin and Occidental, for the purpose of this report.
- At conferences, we discuss the state of French studies and Modern languages in general with colleagues.
- Many have well-funded Language Centers with full time staff and assistants. To name a few Carleton, Saint Olaf, and Macalester.
- Ours is competitive in language, culture, literature, and linguistics courses. However there are areas in which our program could be improved such as conversation classes, business Spanish, medical Spanish, service learning courses, courses that deal with the Latino culture in the US, and courses for heritage speakers.
- Carleton, Macalester, and St. Olaf are the primary competitors in the region that offer comparable programs in Japanese language.

What opportunities does that information suggest?

- The opportunity is to fine-tune our curriculum and update material in our upper level courses.
- In terms of faculty in Japanese, Gustavus is quite competitive against these schools.

What threats does that information present?

- The above schools offer Chinese, which we do not offer.

G. What information from accrediting bodies influences your department?

- Decisions on language assessment methods influence how we assess our program.

What opportunities does that information suggest?

- We re-evaluate our program frequently

What threats does that information suggest?

- none

H. What information related to technology influences your department?

- The Culpeper Language Center plays a very important role in the department. The Culpeper Center director/instructor takes care of the department website, center resources, and student employees. One of the aims of the center is to help faculty develop and/or utilize activities that incorporate technology in the classroom from either working one to one with professors, to assisting student in class and outside of class.

- Technology adds a great value to teaching modern languages. Language instructors are always actively seeking to provide students with ways to engage them in different activities. Some of these include using authentic materials (from the internet, or the satellite tv) in the classroom. These materials then, help students become more familiar with the language and culture and gain exposure to it. Other activities, however, involve collaborative interactions where student must work together creating a final product that showcases their language skills. The Culpeper Center helps these activities become more available, as it allows the practicing of real time and/or deferred time (synchronous, and asynchronous) activities among classmates, such as the use of ichtat, wikis, skype, and software such Comic Life, iWeb, among others, to present materials they have created from their experience with the language.
- The use of technology, also allows the class to get accurate information about the language and culture that they are learning. Because of this, students are exposed to new information, new life styles, not only during class time, but also outside of class time in the Culpeper Center, where there are periodicals, magazines, videos, dictionaries, and tutors available for the students to use.
- When students come to the Culpeper Center, they use many of the resources available, as well as some publisher's websites included with their textbooks. Because of the recent advances in CALL, this websites, enable the students to engage themselves in more online activities that provide them with instant feedback. Besides this, some instructors are assigning online tasks in Moodle, while others are assigning video projects. These kinds of project allow both students and instructors to exploit the resources available in the center.
- The Culpeper Language Center also, is responsible for organizing workshops in topics of interest to the modern language department. These workshops include how to keep incorporated Culpeper into the student's language learning experience. These workshops took place over Spring '08 and will continue to take place during Spring '09 - some of these include:
 - Introduction to Comic Life - this is a software that lets students create a comic page using class related materials.
 - Introduction to Blogs - Create a Blogger account and develop your first blog for a language or literature course.
 - Introduction to Wikis - it looks and feels like a blog, but the user is able to upload files to it, and have other users comment about different posts.
 - Introduction to Google Earth - This software could be used to develop activities where students visit virtually sites in different countries. Students can go on virtual field trips to different countries and explore the world using Google Earth.
 - Voice Recording and Audio Editing - how to use GarageBand and iTunes
 - Introduction to Podcasts - Learn what a podcast is, and how to locate and listen to podcasts and videocasts in other languages.
- There is also a blog created by Dr. Hanway, where Culpeper has added a weekly technology tip.

What opportunities does that information suggest?

- Create more exposure to authentic language input, and to a rich variety of materials that could be exploited by the instructors and the students.
- Provide students with instructional experiences appropriate for the language that they are learning.
- Support faculty as they develop new projects/ideas to include technology in their teaching.

What threats does that information suggest?

- This generates a need to keep faculty updated with the new trends, and how to incorporate these, in a useful and pedagogical way inside the classroom.
- Provide students with the necessary tools to document and develop their own learning, and be able to proof competency in the tools used.
- Provide faculty with additional training so that they may guide students in the use of technology in the classroom.
- It also creates the need to have:
 - Somebody with the teaching background makes this “threat” easier because not all the technology trends available out there, are necessarily good for language learning.
 - A technical specialist to oversee equipment operation, maintenance and repair.

What opportunities does that information suggest?

- We need to learn new relevant technology. The main element that has changed in the teaching of foreign languages in the last fifty years is how much material and information is available to our students. It is important for us as educators to be able to sort through this mass of material and be able to present it in a meaningful manner to our students in ways they understand. New technologies are essential to this purpose.

What threats does that information suggest?

- Not all faculty are good at or interested in using the latest technology in the classroom, and some expectations might be unrealistic.

I. What information about other academic programs at Gustavus influences your department?

- Requirements for students majoring in international management, or taking English courses in Literature in translation.
- Every year we loose potential majors who are specializing in the sciences. Most of the sciences programs are organized in such a way that they prevent students from majoring in a language as well. True for Spanish too, and concerning because there are a number of pre-med/health sciences students that strongly believe that they will serve their future patients better if they can speak Spanish fluently and know more about their culture. Also, some of them would like to use their skills abroad by joining medical teams. This is very true with Japanese; I often lose some of the best students this way.
- The same difficulties are encountered in the French program, these very students would have a better opportunity in francophone Africa for instance, working with Médecins sans frontières, among other organizations in great need of skilled volunteers and workers in the medical and linguistic field.
- Major and minor are offered through the interdisciplinary program of Japanese Studies. Japanese “culture” courses may be cross-listed in such programs as Peace Studies, Gender, Women’s, and Sexuality Studies, and the English Department.

What opportunities does that information suggest?

- We can teach in interdisciplinary programs such as Gender, Women’s, and Sexuality Studies, in Curriculum II and in FTS. For instance Professor Kyoore has taught several times in FTS the following courses: Literature and Ideology in Africa, Literature and Culture in Africa France and Africa societies in dialogue, Managing People in the Public Sector.
- Spanish Faculty could teach LALACS and Education courses.

- Japanese Studies embodies the College's commitment to international and interdisciplinary perspectives. Cross-listing will bring more students in the courses Dr. Shan and Dr. Sakuragi teach in English, enhancing the efficiency of the use of faculty.

What threats does that information suggest?

- Inadequate support for interdisciplinary programs by the Administration or departments may threaten the viability of Japanese Studies Program. Inadequate cooperation among departments may prevent our courses from being cross-listed.

2. Internal Analysis

A. Planning, leadership, and decision-making

Does your department engage in routine planning conversations? If yes, how does it work?

- We do meet on a monthly basis and we have an assessment at the end of the academic year. The French and Spanish sections have regular meetings about the needs of the section.

Does the structure of your department allow for effective use of resources?

- Definitely. Since the Culpeper Center is located within our building, language classes move freely to and from the Center with ease, and in this way the Center is readily an extension of the classroom if needed and available. In addition, all languages have equal access to the facility.
- What makes the resources effective is the well-staffed presence of the Culpeper Center. Please see the Culpeper section for more information.

Is decision-making centralized or decentralized? How does this influence the quality of decision-making, morale, and leadership development?

- Decisions are made democratically within the sections and within the MLC department. We have disagreements regarding decisions made about programs whose enrollments represent challenges. We always try to reach a consensus and always vote on major decisions.

Is there a morale problem in the department either among faculty or students? Is it confined to a segment of the department or is it broadly felt?

- The German program has remained a problematic issue within our department and the issue was taken to the entire faculty (with the recommendation that the major and minor in German be discontinued temporarily). As a result it was referred back to the curriculum committee to be revised as a German Studies program.

List the strengths and weaknesses of department leadership, decision-making, and planning processes.

- All opinions seem to be voiced freely.

B. Curriculum and Instruction

What are your departmental course, major, and advising capacities?

- All tenure track faculty share the advising of majors and minors.

Which aspects of your curriculum do you consider distinctive.

- The new courses that incorporate more of the francophone world and how we blend history, culture and literature.

What thinking led to the current configuration of your major requirements?

- We built our requirements from what we thought all our majors should be able to accomplish. In addition, we considered changes in the language and culture disciplines which were occurring at the national level. We studied major programs in similar departments in other institutions and surveyed our students for their interests. In this way our newly designed major responded to internal needs and expectations as well as reflected changes occurring in the teaching languages and cultures.
- Any language program should address the five following areas:
 - Aural Understanding
 - Speaking
 - Reading
 - Writing
 - Culture

That is why all majors must complete a portfolio showing their competence in these five areas.

- We have made constant interdisciplinary changes to accommodate more majors.

What constitutes good teaching in your department?

- The instructor must be linguistically competency to teach effectively in the target language, and offer courses that support the department's mission.

What kinds of conversations do you have in your department about teaching?

- The conversation is often informal, among professors, and at the end of the year it is more formal with the end-of-year assessment.
- We also share teaching strategies through workshops in the Culpeper Center.

As you look toward the future of your department what are your staffing needs?

- We need to rebuild the German program so that the German section can staff one more full time professor.
- The Spanish section needs one or two permanent teaching assistants. It would strengthen the other sections to have a teaching assistant.

C. Financial Resources and Facilities

Who manages the department budget?

- The department chair and the administrative assistant do.

Who makes decisions about how the department budget is spent?

- The decisions are made at department meetings by voting if need be.

Who sees the department budget reports each month?

- The department chair and the administrative assistant do.
- The report is available to whoever wants to see it.

What tools would be beneficial to your analysis of your department budget as you prepare the annual budget request? (comparison to a year ago, spending trends)?

- Both
- New costs

D. Student Recruitment & Promoting the Department.

What current campus resources do you use to announce news related to your department?

- Academic building bulletin boards, campus wide posters promoting cultural activities, support all Admission sponsored programs, activities, and initiatives.

Have you identified your potential students and communicated that view to the Admission Office?

- No

Which current student recruitment efforts, initiated by the Admission office, do members of your department support?

- We contact or meet with all potential students the Admission office sends us. We participate in all Admission office events.
- We meet with potential minority students and parents
- We participate in presidential scholarship interviews.

What efforts do you make to recruit majors from among currently enrolled students?

- We encourage them at the 251-252 level courses.
- We carefully create J-term experiences conducive to the developing interest in cultures and languages.

How does your department make itself visible to the campus community?

- We are active in campus activities such as International Festival, PASO and OLAS activities, Crossroads events, Honor Society's for the Language Majors, and our language clubs. We invite artists and lecturers. We contribute to other department's classes (we are often guest speakers in our colleagues' classes).
- Spanish students and faculty have participated in Community Education classes.

Section 3 Strategic Initiatives and Recommendations

Languages to be added to MLC

Chinese

Arabic

Portuguese

New courses

Reconsider reviving MLC 360, a course in the Japanese section taught in English. With a new tenure-track position in Japanese this might be the right time.

Develop new courses on East Asia, such as Women in East Asia and East Asian Cinema.

In Spanish, the need for a course specifically designed to meet the needs of heritage speakers will be a reality as the number of heritage speakers in our program increases.

Study abroad

All majors and minors should be able (financially) to spend a minimum of one semester studying in an approved program that the student selects in consultation with his/her advisor and the Center for International and Cultural Education. Fellowships and grants could be provided to the students in need so that they can benefit from the enriching experience of study abroad.

Cooperate with The Global Insight on the "A Gustavus Semester in Asia" initiative.

Language assistant program

MLC would like to have a native assistant each year for each language, who would spend an academic year living among the student community and assisting each language program. This was the case until the administration cut this program to a rotating basis. The language assistants could also play a more active role in helping to prepare students who are considering a program of study abroad in the target language.

Culpeper Language Center

The Center should be staffed with a full time staff person who has experience in teaching a foreign language.

Placement test results

Student registration system needs to interact with the Language placement test, in order to ensure that all students (incoming as well as current students) take the placement test BEFORE registering for their first language course at Gustavus Adolphus College.

Section 4 Assessment

Specific Goals

1. To provide students with an understanding that the language of a people is an important component of its culture.
2. To develop an understanding that the concept of culture embraces all aspects of the life of a people, including their arts, literature, history, and the linguistic, societal, and political processes of that people.
3. To provide students with programs that will guide them toward achieving proficiency in listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing.
4. To provide students with programs that insure that graduates will be well prepared whatever their career decision may be.
5. To enhance students' ability to understand foreign cultures and to critically conceptualize their own culture in a globalized world.

Outcomes

Non-major and non-minors

- Students will acquire an awareness of and sensitivity to the target culture.
- Students will achieve at least a minimum level of proficiency that will enable them to perform linguistic tasks in the target language.

Majors and minors

- Students will achieve a level of cultural understanding that will enable them to interact appropriately in terms of cultural norms.
- Students will interact in the target language through listening, speaking, reading, and writing at a level that involves situations and issues of a more complex nature.
- Students will develop crucial language and cultural skills necessary to pursue studies in areas such as politics, economics, and history of a certain foreign culture.

The meeting of goals and measuring of outcomes

We address these goals in our syllabi, through our daily classroom activities and assignments, and by making available to students a variety of extracurricular activities that are designed to enhance the classroom experience. In addition, all programs in the department advocate a period of residence and study in the country of the target language.

Specifics

1. Beginning level language courses

- The goal is that students acquire basic reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills in the target language, *and to understand how language operates within a certain social and cultural context.*

2. Intermediate level courses

- A higher level of linguistic and cultural competency is expected at this level. At the end of their intermediate level courses students will be able to write short essays in the target language, and contextualize language in a more complex manner. They will also read and discuss short literary, and/or other appropriate texts in the target language.

3. Advanced level composition, and composition and conversation courses

- Students will develop a higher linguistic and oral competence in the target language. They write essays in which they formulate and defend succinct arguments in the target language. They read literary and other texts and understand audiovisual materials in the target language. Their understanding of cultural issues should be such to allow them to maintain a conversation on sophisticated topics.

4. Advanced courses for majors and minors

- The students' linguistic, literary and cultural competency in the target language will allow them to interact more fluently with native speakers. They will also be able to analyze well a literary text, and have a basic knowledge of the historical and cultural context of the author and his/her work. Basic literary methods and linguistic theories are used in analyzing literary texts.

The outcomes of these goals are measured on an on-going basis through daily classroom interaction and specific assignments, unit tests, and comprehensive semester exams of an oral and written nature. In the case of the French and Spanish literature and language programs outcomes are further monitored by the completion of a senior portfolio. The portfolio reflects the cultural, literary, and linguistic competence that has been achieved in their course of study at Gustavus Adolphus College and a country of the target language. Certain programs also measure the outcomes by a diagnostic exam that is administered in the fifth and seventh semesters, respectively. The two area studies programs measure their outcomes with the production and presentation of a major scholarly paper, written in the senior year under the guidance of one of the participating faculty members.

The outcomes inform us as to what extent we are meeting our program goals. The impact of our contributions to various committees will determine how well the department is meeting the goal for itself.

Appendix – German Section Strategic Plan Document -- Independently Submitted

2008 "Strategic Plan" suggestions for German at GAC

It sounds very good that we, the faculty, are encouraged to dream wildly and announce our desires and suggestions as to what would in our opinion improve our college in the future when more money is available. But knowing a little about how culture develops and changes, I am aware that we, a small liberal arts college in the Lutheran tradition in the American Middle West, with hardly an endowment to speak in the current money crisis, have to take only very careful steps in order to regain the reputation we lost in the recent decades (ranking in the *U.S. News and World Report* and in other sources), and with respect to German at Gustavus, for example, regain the Teaching Major that in the past helped to bring us students, for we placed our teachers well in the five state area from which we draw our student body mostly, and these graduates spoke well for us.

What we need in German, because Gustavus is behind in this respect — and other colleges with which we compete in our area know this — is with respect to

Personnel:

2 full time professors,

with at least one of them

highly qualified in teaching the structure [and knowing the history] of German and the literary history of the German speaking countries,

and the other one

highly qualified to teach the history of culture and literature of the German speaking countries.

For the current time, with the administrative personnel that we have and that does not support a German program that a college like our should have because it would serve our students right, we need immediately

1 full time professor shared with another language (preferably shared with Swedish or Russian [this combination is used by many other colleges in these times when in the U.S. Spanish is the *in* language to fulfill language requirements, and, based on experience, this combination works usually very well — and for good reasons it should])

and

1 "teaching assistant" from a German speaking country (German and English language oriented definitely preferred) every year

Material:

Desirable would be films for a full course or half-course or a general support program "History of German Film."

It would actually be good for our students' general education (i.e. not only for students of German) if the college would show weekly, on weekends, a high quality movie (if they are from foreign countries, with English subtitles) so that all Gustavus students at the end of every three years have had the chance to see the best that the movie industry of the entire world has produced.

It would be good for all languages in our department if the college could take all of our language students to the Minneapolis Art Institute every year so that they get into more direct contact with the culture the language of which they study. Also access to theatre performances from the resp. cultures should be organized for them by the college.

German programs abroad:

Although we don't have the money to support all of our students so that they can spend at least one semester abroad, we should not disadvantage students with a major or minor in German (that was always one of the noblest features in our foreign languages program). Therefore the German programs we are connected with (esp. IES) should be recommended to our students; and maybe a Gustavus-run program in Germany should be developed (although that did not work recently when we tried it). Important is that majors and minors in German are not excluded from this necessary Junior Year experience because of their financial situation; — and this experience should be in the junior year, after preparing here for it with serious language study.