

Assessment of Student Learning Plan (ASLP): Linguistics

2018-19 Academic Year

University of Southern Maine

A. College, Department, Date

College CSTH
Department Linguistics
Date 5/28/19

B. Contact Person for the Assessment Plan

Name and title Dana McDaniel, Chair and Professor of Linguistics

C. Degree Program

Name of Degree Program Linguistics B.A. (including general linguistics and concentrations in ASL/English Interpreting, Speech and Language Science, ASL Linguistics, French Linguistics, and Spanish Linguistics)

D. Assessment of Student Learning: Program Assessment

Step 1: Identify the Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's)

- a. Are your student learning outcomes published on your department's website?
Yes/No

i. If yes, please provide the url: _____
<https://cms.usm.maine.edu/linguistics/overview>

- b. Please identify **which of your student learning outcome(s) were assessed this past academic year.**

Note: We are in the process of submitting our renewal for accreditation for the ASL/English Interpreting Concentration of the linguistics major. By the

end of June all of these learning outcomes will have been assessed and reported on.

#s 12-22

- c. Do you have a **matrix or curriculum map** showing when your student learning outcomes are assessed and in which courses? **Yes/No**
 - i. If yes, do you have this map published on your website? Please provide the url or attach a copy of the curriculum map.

<https://cms.usm.maine.edu/linguistics/overview>

Step 2: Assessment Methods Selected and Implemented

- a. **Identify which assessment measures (beyond individual student grading) were used to determine whether students achieved the stated learning outcomes for the degree.** (NOTE: Many undergraduate programs are using their recently approved Capstone courses to assess student learning. Assessment plans included in your Capstone Proposal in the CCC may be referred to as examples of assessment work in your program.)

The following are the ones that apply specifically to the ASL Linguistics and ASL/English Interpreting Concentrations. The numbers in parentheses indicate the outcomes each assessment corresponds to. We are working on developing additional assessments for the other outcomes.

American Sign Language Assessment (ASLA) or American Sign Language Proficiency Interview (ASLPI) (#9)

Pre-Intermediate Interpreting and Advanced Classes (must achieve a 2 or higher) We are currently testing all students upon completion of ASL 202 Intermediate ASL II on the ASLA, whether or not they are majors. The goal is to get a snapshot based upon external assessment of where our students are as they transition from their prerequisite ASL classes into higher levels of the major.

Pre-Placement in Practicum 1: (must achieve a 3 or higher on the ASLA). All practicum students have now passed this benchmark.

Written NAD/RID Exam (#13; #17; #18; #21): Taken prior to Practicum 1 and must be passed for entry into practicum. All Practicum I and II students now satisfy this requirement.

Formal Interview and Portfolio prior to Practicum (#13; #14; #15; #16; #17; #18; #20; #21): Demonstration of the above, plus presentation of student's portfolio demonstrative evidence of competencies in English, ASL, and interpreting. All candidates for practicum were interviewed and assessed in individual meetings (November, 2018).

Outcomes testing (#19; #20; #22): Upon completion of Practicum 1 and Practicum 2, students are tested on two videos: 1. ASL to English (minutes); 2. English to ASL (20 minutes). Students then receive a process mediation regarding the video of their choice. Results of these outcome studies do not figure into students' grades but rather inform faculty regarding curriculum needs and issues. *This outcomes assessment was not performed in 2019.*

Maine licensure (#13; #18): The application for Maine licensure must be completed and in the student's portfolio before completion of Practicum 1. Only students remaining in state are required to apply for licensure. One exception is that student entering specialized practica (for example, medical interpreting) must have their licensure before placement. Licensure assures sufficient course work in ASL, interpreting, ethics and Deaf culture to meet the state requirement to interpret. All students in Practicum submitted their licensure applications to us and most of those staying in state have already submitted for the 2019-2020 year.

It is highly recommended that students take the EIPA Knowledge Test (#13; #17; #18; #21): before graduation and the EIPA Performance Test soon after graduation. Several of the graduates have signed up to take the EIPA written test, but none had taken it by graduation. Pre-practicum students have also prepped for this exam in their class and are planning to take it over the summer.

It is highly recommended that students take the RID NIC performance examination within 2 year of graduation. (#15; #18). Several graduates are already planning to take this test this coming year. Several previous graduates took it and are awaiting results. Starting June 1, 2019 there will be a moratorium on taking this test, until the new one is in place (projected January 2020).

We had been working on bringing the BEI (Board of Examination of Interpreting) test to Maine from Texas (#13; #17; #18; #21). This examination is expected to eventually become an additional credentialing option for interpreters nationally. Judy Shepard-Kegl and Kelly Fitzgerald took this test August 2017 (Shepard-Kegl: Master's level (passed), Fitzgerald: beginning level (plans to re-take)). While we are

encouraging students to take this test (and several have and others are scheduled to do so), the BEI is still a regional exam and new licensure procedures will not recognize it, so because bringing the test here would require \$10,000 per year and establishment of a testing and rating team, our plans to bring it to Maine have been put on hold until such time as it is nationally recognized.

One effort over this past year was to upgrade the requirements for interpreter licensure in the state of Maine. Our proposal for this successfully passed committee in May 2019 and now moved to rule-making and then the legislature. In the process of this upgrade, the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation instituted a policy that non-nationally recognized credentialing cannot count for licensure. This impacts three components of our assessment options here at USM:

1. Because RID recently stopped offering the ED:K-12 certification that recognized >4.0 on any EIPA exam and passing the written test, EIPA testing can no longer lead to certification in Maine. Currently, only the RID exams (NIC and CDI) are recognized. While we still strongly recommend the EIPA for all graduates and educational interpreters, this change combined with the cost of this test will reduce the number of applicants taking the EIPA.
2. The new licensure law will require >3.5 on an ASL language assessment for any pre-certified interpreters. Since the ASLA (American Sign Language Assessment; one tester) that we use here at USM is (parallel to but) not nationally recognized, only the ASLPI (American Sign Language Proficiency Interview) will be accepted as evidence of ASL skill. The ASLA (which is the same as the ASLPI but with one rater rather than three) but gives more detailed feedback. We will still offer both and will continue with the ASLA at the end of ASL 202, but we expect that many students may opt to take the ASLPI because it will also satisfy the licensure requirement.
3. Since the RID/NAD National Interpreter Certification written exam will be required for conditional licensure, our student will already have fulfilled that requirement before taking Practicum.

b. Briefly describe when you implemented the assessment activity; if a rubric or other structured approach was used to assess student outcome achievement, please describe and/or attach the rubric.

We've been doing all the listed assessments since 2009 (or earlier), except for the written NAD/RID Exam, which we started implementing in 2016/17.

Implementation:

Outcome #9 was measured during the fall semester --all students completing ASL 202 were administered the ASLA. This assessment is externally scored. Additional students take the exam at their own discretion upon acceptance at USM for placement in courses above ASL 202 and prior to the Practicum Interview in November.

Outcomes #13; #17; #18; #21 are must be completed prior to Practicum I and are verified during the spring semester (November).

Outcomes #13; #14; #15; #16; #17; #18; #20; #21 are completed prior to the Practicum Interview in November prior to Spring Semester. They are verified during the fall semester. This assessment is externally scored.

Outcomes #13; #14; #15; #16; #17; #18; #20; #21 are completed prior to the Practicum Interview in November prior to Spring Semester. They are verified during the fall semester. This assessment is externally scored.

Outcomes #13m #18 are completed prior to the Practicum Interview in November prior to Spring Semester and are verified at that time. This verification is done by the interview team consisting of the (coordinator of the ASL/English interpreting concentration; Deaf ASL faculty; Interpreting faculty; and occasional stakeholders (interpreting agency directors, etc.)

Step 3: Using the Assessment results to Improve Student Learning

- a. *Briefly describe your unit's process of reviewing the program assessment results (for example, annual discussion by faculty committee, etc.).*

The results for all students are reviewed upon receipt and at year's end at meetings of the director of the ASL/English Interpreting program, the coordinator of the ASL program, and some other interpreting and ASL faculty. The results are correlated with students' performance in practicum and in the advanced ASL courses and have informed changes in the required levels as a result.

- b. *Identify the specific changes that have been or will be made to improve student learning based on these program assessment results. (For example, what changes will the program make at the assignment, course, or program level to improve student learning, based on the assessment results?)*

We make various adjustments to the curriculum each year based on the results.

For two years prior to this, we experimented with an approach to students who do not test into practicum but are close. The experiment consisted of allowing them to do the practicum with the stipulation that they would focus on certain skills. Performance of the students given this option fell sufficiently below others who had met the

requirements for admission to practicum. We made the decision that in future years the entry requirements for practicum will be strictly followed without exception. This year that policy was strictly enforced and the level of practicum students was more consistent and promising of successful outcomes.

This past year, we experimented with allowing students who did not pass the NIC written test or the ASLA at > 3.0 to fulfill those requirements anytime up to the beginning of Practicum I (at the beginning of Spring semester). The students who passed these tests late, as a whole were weaker than the other students in the class, but did pass Practicum. We have decided to accept these scores as long as they are received before Practicum 1.

In the past year, we experimented with allowing someone who had failed the ethics component of the Practicum interview and who had passed the above ASLA and NIC written late to enter practicum. This outcome, while the student passed, was not successful. Placements had to be modified, etc. In future, individuals who do not pass the Practicum Interview ethics component will not be admitted to Practicum the following Spring.

In the past two years, we have also modified the curriculum for LIN 434 (Advanced Interpreting and Research), a course that isn't required for the major, for students who do not test into practicum. The course has students focus on their ASL/interpreting enhancement skills and preparation for the RID written exam. This year, when it was fully implemented, it was very successful and we have decided to continue this practice. We have also allowed students completing Pre-Practicum to have their prerequisites assessed early, leaving only the ethics component for the Practicum Interview.

We require a B or better plus an ASLA/ASLPI > 2 for entry into intermediate interpreting classes and advanced ASL classes. This past year we had several students who passed their ASL 202 class with only a B-. Rather than accept the B-, we have encouraged these students to work on their ASL skills over the summer. We have found an on-line tutor (a previous USM instructor) who is experienced with such tutor and can be hired for this purpose, if they choose. Verification from this instructor that the benchmarks have been met for a B or re-assessment of skills prior to the fall semester will allow students to enter the next level of courses.

c. Date of most recent program review/self-study?

Linguistics: 2018/19

The ASL/English Interpreting Concentration is currently completing their self-study prior to their 10-year re-application for credentialing from the Collegiate

Commission on Interpreter Education (CCIE). It will be submitting the end of June. An assessment team has already been assigned composed of top interpreters nationally (Carolyn Ball, Debra Russell, and Barbara Schaffer). This team will assess the self-study and, if approved, will constitute the on-site assessment time for the on-site review in 2020.

E. Other Assessment Activities: *Briefly describe any additional assessment-related activities your program is using at the course level (for example, creating common assignments and/or assignment rubrics for use across different sections of required courses, examining student progress in entry-level courses, other assessment projects implemented by individual faculty, etc.).*

Since LIN 185 is the foundation course in the major, we are working on improving it in various ways and adding more assessments. This year we had the students take an ungraded quiz on the first day of class that they retake at the end of the semester for a grade. The quiz covers general linguistic concepts. We only have two semesters worth of data, but both times, there was significant improvement between the pretest and the posttest, with improved scores for almost every student and on all of the questions. We have also added some features, such as Zoom review sessions, to the online course, which has had a high DFW rate. The trend is in the right direction, with a decreased DFW rate and also higher grades among the students who complete the course.

F. Community Engagement Activities in your departmental curriculum:

a. Does your department have a student learning outcome that is related to any community engagement activities? If so, please state the outcome.

We have the following one, for students in the ASL/English Interpreting and ASL Linguistics concentrations: Establish connections with and become involved in the local Deaf community.

b. Please indicate if any of the community engagement activities listed below are included in your program's curriculum, by noting which activities are required or optional for students in your major.

<u>Community Engagement Activity</u>	<u>Required/Optional</u>	
Student Research (related to a community-based problem)	<u>Y</u>	O
Student-Faculty Community Research Project	<u>Y</u>	O
Internship, or a Field Experience	<u>Y</u>	R
Independent Study (community-related project)	<u>Y</u>	O

Capstone Course (community-related project)	<u>Y</u>	R
Service-Learning (course-based)	<u>Y</u>	R
Study Abroad, or an International Program	<u>Y</u>	O
Interdisciplinary Collaborative Project (community related)	<u>Y</u>	O
Student Leadership Activities (related to a team project)	<u>Y</u>	O
Students/Faculty Community Leadership (advisory boards, committees, conference presentations)	<u>Y</u>	O
Other Activities (not mentioned above):		

c. Please list any courses (i.e. EDU 400) that have a community engagement activity in your program.

Entry-level courses: _____ Mid-level courses: _____ Upper-level courses: _____

Entry-level courses: LIN 185 (optional), ASL 101, ASL 102

Mid-level courses: , LIN 203, LIN 331, ASL 201, 202

Upper-level courses: LIN 434, 435, 436, ASL 401, 402