

## **2007-2008 Annual Program Review Report**

### **Report for Licensure Programs in Foreign Languages**

**(French 7-12, German 7-12, Latin 7-12, Spanish 7-12**

**and Classics with a Latin Teaching Major 7-12)**

#### **Program Reviewers**

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#### **Introduction**

The Department of Languages and Literature at Austin Peay offers the following licensure programs in Foreign Languages: French (7-12), German (7-12), Latin (7-12), Spanish (7-12), and Classics with a Latin Teaching Major (7-12). These Foreign Language licensure programs share a common Foreign Language methods course (LING 4400) and faculty resources. Students seeking licensure in French, German, and Latin must complete the prescribed upper-division coursework in the language, literature and civilization of the target language as well as two semesters (6-8 hours) of another language (see attached). Students seeking licensure in Spanish must complete coursework in Spanish and Spanish American literature and civilization and Spanish language (see attached). Students seeking licensure in Classics with a Latin Teaching Major must take the prescribed coursework in Classical Greek and Latin, including Classical Greek and Roman literature and civilization (see attached). In addition, all students seeking 7-12 licensure must complete the

Professional Education minor; Educ 4610: Student Teaching (7-8); Educ 4710: Student Teaching (9-12); 4950: Seminar; and the appropriate Milestone requirements. Students seeking licensure in modern foreign languages are required to complete an intensive immersion experience in a country in which the target language is spoken. (See Tennessee Teacher Licensure Standards: Foreign Languages, 2001.)

The licensure programs in Foreign Languages are small, with twelve students completing the licensure program in Spanish between 2003- 2008; two students completing the licensure program in French from 2003-2008; and no students completing the licensure program in German, Latin, or Classics with a Latin Teaching Major during the same period.

## **I. Assessment of Candidates**

### **Evaluation from Area Principals 2007-2008**

“Evaluation of APSU Teachers by Area Principals 2007-2008” is a study evaluating strengths and weaknesses of teachers entering local systems after being trained at APSU. It contains five compilations. Included are a Likert scale measuring fourteen categories of competencies, sections with individual statements about strengths, weaknesses, and suggested improvements, and a section containing anecdotal comments about APSU trainees who have been “non-renewed.”

On the Likert scale portion APSU-educated teachers scored above “satisfactory” on twelve of the fourteen sections. The two strongest qualities were subject matter knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge, where high school teachers taught at APSU in the previous five years scored 3.5 of possible 4.0 on the scale. The weakest two sections for high school teachers concerned classroom management techniques and strategies for teaching students from different cultures or with varying learning needs. On these two parts the average result was 2.8, slightly below the 3.0 “agree” to satisfactory competence mark. The four comments sections contain 137 statements about strengths, weaknesses, suggestions for improvement, and statements about non-renewed APSU-trained teachers.

In the section on strengths, subject matter proficiency was mentioned five times and technological competency four times. The one statement specific to foreign language instructors indicated that foreign

language teachers were better trained than those in other fields. "... teachers in different subject areas vary greatly in training. (Other) teachers do not seem to be as well-trained as foreign language instructors."

In the area of weaknesses classroom management was mentioned fifteen times, adapting instruction to meet varying student needs seven times, and instructional strategies four times. These were also the focus in the "suggestions for improvement of education program at APSU" section. Classroom management appeared eight times, instructional strategies five times, and adapting to varying needs four times. The section asking about problems of non-renewed APSU trained teachers (previous five years), mentioned only two non-renewals and one being considered. Again, problems were classroom management and instructional competence. Because this study covered teachers from the entire university it is difficult to extrapolate data specific to the foreign languages program. However some conclusions may be drawn which apply to all disciplines, including foreign language teacher preparation. Local building administrators are more than satisfied with the APSU product. They see strengths in subject matter proficiency and use of technology. They cite weaknesses in classroom management skills and instructional strategies. This would suggest that the university continue its effort teaching content, while seeking methods even to improve this strength. Obviously, there seems to be a need for increasing efforts to teach the "nuts and bolts" of classroom management, from lesson planning to maintaining control of classroom environment.

Possibly the optimum pre-teaching opportunity to improve classroom skills would be in the methods classes before and during the student teaching experience. There may be unique opportunities for foreign language teachers in these methods classes. The local area has an unusual amount of ethnic resources from which to draw. Language instruction lends itself to use of a multitude of exercises, games, and projects to reinforce instruction. Focusing on these assets in methods classes could lead to the meaningful "bell to bell" teaching which is paramount in establishing classroom control. As with future teachers university-wide, honing management skills will better help prepare language arts students for the "real world."

### **ETS Results (Praxis II: Content Knowledge and Productive Language Skills)**

During the review period twelve candidates in Spanish and two candidates in French completed their teacher licensure programs. Initial data indicated that some of them were add-on candidates about whom we have little data, and who were not trained in our program. We asked for and received data which was revised to

include only candidates in APSU's licensure program, excluding "add-on" licensure candidates and alternate licensure candidates.

Review of results for the Praxis II: Test of Content Knowledge in Spanish shows the APSU candidates to be on the whole very well-prepared. Of twelve candidates attempting the Content Knowledge in Spanish, only one candidate fell below the minimum score of 152 on the first attempt. That student re-took the Test of Content Knowledge in Spanish and obtained a passing score on the second attempt. Twelve candidates attempted the Test of Productive Language Skills in Spanish and two obtained a score lower than the minimum score of 154 on the first attempt. Both students obtained passing scores on the Test of Productive Language Skills on the second attempt.

Of twelve APSU candidates for licensure in Spanish, the mean score for the Test of Content Knowledge in Spanish was 180.5, well above the minimum score of 152, and the same group obtained a mean score of 184.08 in the Test of Productive Language Skills in Spanish, for which the minimum score was 154.

The two candidates for licensure in French both obtained a score above the minimum of 160 for on the Test of Content Knowledge in French on their first attempt. Both candidates also took the Test of Productive Language Skills in French. One student obtained a score below the minimum of 165 on the initial attempt; however, upon re-taking the test, the student obtained a passing score. The mean score of APSU candidates for the Praxis II Test of Content Knowledge in French was 175, well above the minimum score of 160, and the mean score for the Test of Productive Language Skills in French was 177.5, well above the minimum score of 165.

PRAXIS scores show the failure rate to be low, and in all cases the student successfully passed the exam(s) on a second try.

## **II. Assessment of Program**

### **Follow-up Surveys of Graduates in First Five Years of Teaching**

According to the data in the “Follow-up Survey of Graduates in First Five Years of Teaching--All Programs Fall 2002-Spring 2008” and “Follow-up Survey of Graduates in First Five Years of Teaching—All Programs by Year,” the alumni were very complimentary overall of the teacher education program at Austin Peay.

When looking at data for “All Programs for Fall 2002-Spring 2008,” on a three-point scale, with 3=Very Satisfied, 2= Satisfied, 1= Not Satisfied, all items were rated by the respondents between Satisfied (2) and Very Satisfied (3), with the exception of one item: [8] Interpret aggregated and disaggregated assessment data appropriately and uses this information to evaluate student learning and for making data driven instructional decisions (1.96). Looking at the data for “All Programs by Year,” we see that in 2002-2003, all 17 items were rated Very Satisfied (3); while in 2003-2004, respondents rated the teacher education program with Not Satisfied (1) in the following areas: [3] Design instruction that addresses the individual needs of students with diverse cultural and language backgrounds ; [5] Implement appropriate teaching and learning strategies to engage students in active learning opportunities; [6] Link learning with students’ prior knowledge, experiences, and cultural backgrounds;[8] Interpret aggregated and disaggregated assessment data appropriately and use this information to evaluate student learning and for making data driven instructional decisions; and [12] Maintain accurate and up-to-date records. Other years (2004-2005, 2005-2006, 2006-2007, and 2007-2008) consistently rated the teacher education program between Satisfied (2) and Very Satisfied (3), with the exception of one item: [8] Interpret aggregated and disaggregated assessment data appropriately and uses this information to evaluate student learning and for making data driven instructional decisions (1.833 in 2005-2006 and 1.67 in 2006-2007). It is to be noted that the number of respondents per year and the standard deviation are not indicated on the data for “All Programs by Year.”

In addition, data for the Spanish licensure program is identified on the “Follow-up Survey of Graduates in First Five Years of Teaching by Program.” On a three point scale, with 3= Very Satisfied, 2= Satisfied, 1= Not Satisfied, all items in the follow-up survey for Spanish licensure were rated as Very Satisfied (3), with the following exceptions: [7.] Use assessment strategies, instruments, and information appropriate to the learning expectations being evaluated (Satisfied); [8.] Interpret aggregated and disaggregated assessment data appropriately and uses this information to evaluate student learning and for making data driven instructional decisions (Satisfied); and [4] Demonstrates a thorough understanding of your content area (Not Satisfied).

Based on the survey data of All Programs and also specifically of the Spanish licensure program, there is a consistent concern about graduates' ability to interpret aggregated and disaggregated assessment data appropriately and to use this information to evaluate student learning and for making data driven instructional decisions.

The survey data is accompanied by "Examples of Comments from Graduates in the First Five Years of Service." In addition, anecdotal information was collected by committee members from new foreign language teachers in the CMCSS. The following are the top two issues that seemed to create the most difficulty for foreign language participants in the program.

Poor preparation for effective classroom management was an issue for several of those who participated in the five-year alumni survey. Discipline was not as much of an issue as were monitoring group activities, transitions from one activity to another, and managing multi-level activities within the same class. Providing students in the methods class with opportunities to design specific lesson plans (no less than five) that include multi-level activities to address these issues as well as providing instruction/modeling on ways to manage these situations to keep students on task would be beneficial. It would not necessarily require a great deal of work on the part of the instructor but could prove invaluable to students to be prepared for these types of lessons and/or be able to monitor and adjust during them. This would also help those teachers who are hired in the system and may be required to teach more than one level in the same class period, as often occurs in the language programs in the CMCSS school system.

Another area of concern is creation of valid assessments and evaluations by the student teacher. Ancillary materials are generally available with textbooks, yet these may not always be appropriate depending on the demographic of the student population and/or varying ability levels. Student teachers expressed a need for instruction in the creation of original materials that assess precisely what concepts need to be assessed and, at the same time, meet state standards and objectives. Dependence on the textbook materials/tests during the student teaching experience often results in an evaluation instrument that does not match with the teaching methods. In other words, student teachers may "teach one way and test another." This appears as a major concern of both the education program alumni as well as the cooperating educators. We understand that this

problem is now being addressed in the Educ 4270 course, but we feel it might also need to be reinforced in the methods course with more specific evaluation instruments required for the language of specialization.

### **III. Assessment System**

The review team had several concerns and observations about the assessment system.

- Some of the most useful data we received this year were the PRAXIS results broken down by language and candidate. It was particularly important to have the names of the candidates, since initial data included results for candidates seeking add-on licensure and alternate licensure, along with students who trained in our program. Upon our request, the data was reissued including only the students who had completed our licensure program. Our plans and proposed changes need to be based on an accurate assessment of the performance of our own students.
- The information from the area principals and the graduate follow-up survey would also have been more helpful if the data had been broken down by program. It is impossible to know if any of the comments had been made by graduates of one of our Foreign Language licensure programs or their supervisors.
- It would be helpful to know which areas of our students' Content Knowledge need strengthening. In the future, the School of Education has agreed to provide us with more specific sub-test results.
- There is a clear need for an evaluative instrument to provide us with feedback from our alumni in Foreign Languages. Faculty from all the languages are engaged in developing such an instrument and a plan for its use. The instrument will be developed during AY 2008-09, with an anticipated date of implementation in Fall, 2009.

### **Conclusions and recommendations**

Due to the very small number of students completing licensure in French, German, Latin and Classics with a Latin Teaching Major, the data we have available for those languages cannot be seen as statistically significant. However, close examination of the data available for the Spanish licensure program helps us clarify the strengths and challenges of Austin Peay's Foreign Language licensure program overall.

Despite a growing need for Foreign Language teachers in Tennessee, Austin Peay has a relatively small number of students completing licensure in French, German, Latin, and Classics. Several new initiatives are underway which are intended to strengthen these programs and to increase the number of students completing the licensure in all Foreign Languages.

### **LING 4400: Teaching Foreign Languages in the Secondary Schools**

In past years, due to small class enrollments, the Foreign Language methods course (LING 4400) has been offered once every two years. Beginning in the Spring of 2009, it will be offered once per year.

### **Licensure in German (7-12)**

The German licensure program at Austin Peay State University is relatively new in its current form. For several years prior to 2003 there was no full-time German instructor in the Department of Languages and Literature and Upper Division classes were not offered. Dr. Norbert Puszkar joined the department in Fall 2003 and is working to rebuild the German program.

In 2004-2005 a study-abroad course for German (a requirement for licensure) was designed and approved. Since then the study-abroad course has been taught twice and students who are currently studying towards licensure have participated. The Licensure for German was approved by the state licensure office in Spring 2005. Currently two students are working towards their licensure in German.

### **Licensure in Latin (7-12) and Classics with a Latin Teaching Major (7-12)**

The University of Tennessee at Knoxville and Austin Peay State University are the only two state schools in Tennessee that offer certification in Latin. The APSU program in Latin licensure is also still new, and the first graduates will be coming out this year. Latin remains an area in which there is a critical shortage nationwide and this is unlikely to change in the immediate future. Secondary enrollments in Latin continue to grow and they are clearly outstripping the availability of qualified teachers. There are currently four unfilled positions in Tennessee alone. We anticipate that as awareness of the program at Austin Peay grows, so will interest in completing that program. Until that happens, however, it will not be possible to adequately assess the results of the program.

### **PRAXIS: Test of Productive Language Skills**

Discussion among the APSU teaching faculty members has identified one major area where our program could make changes in order to help the candidates perform still better on the PRAXIS. We find that the non-native speakers of French and Spanish are particularly intimidated by the test of Productive Language Skills. Although all licensure students have had an immersion experience in a country where the target language is spoken, they have little experience in being tested for oral proficiency. The oral proficiency portion of their senior exit exam is normally scheduled after they have already taken the PRAXIS.

In the short term, we have determined to move up the date of the senior exit exam for licensure candidates only, so that by the time they take the PRAXIS, they will already have the experience of a successful oral proficiency test behind them. In the long term, we are studying the possibility of incorporating more oral testing at earlier levels of the program. In Spanish, for example, a brief oral test is being phased into the elementary classes. If this is found to improve the performance of licensure candidates, a similar test may be added to other levels and in other languages.

In the graduate follow-up survey data sets the students cite as strength of the APSU program the caring, knowledgeable professors who were readily available to help them, the hands-on field experiences, and their training in the use of technology. PRAXIS results show that, on the whole, our program is successfully preparing the students for licensure. The few students who failed took the exam again and passed.

Faculty members in French have noted that the current practice of spending two semesters on history/civilization and two semesters on literature in alternate years appears to be short-changing the students in both areas. As a result, we are proposing curricular changes that include a new four-course sequence: Approaches to French Literature, French Poetry, French Theatre, and French Fiction. Students will also be required to take a course in European history offered by the Department of History and Philosophy, ensuring that the French history they learn will be in a broader context, rather than in isolation. The entire package of proposed curriculum changes is attached.

### **Low-Producing Program Designation**

The Spanish major has suffered from several reports in the press that it is on a list of low-producing majors that may be targeted for elimination. It is a fact that the number of students taking the Spanish major is low enough to draw attention from the Tennessee Board of Regents. Part of the problem is that the students of Spanish in our program may choose between two majors with slightly different requirements: the Spanish major or the Foreign Language major with a specialization in Spanish. Licensure students are required to choose the Spanish major, which was designed specifically to help them pass the PRAXIS by including the entire course sequence in both Spanish and Spanish-American literature and civilization. In response to the periodic designation of the Spanish major as an endangered program, Spanish faculty members propose to pass curricular changes reclassifying the two majors as Foreign Languages with a Spanish specialization Option I and Option II. The total number of foreign language majors will then be high enough to prevent the programs from appearing on the list of low-producing majors. This change will benefit all the languages.

In conclusion, examination of the available data, particularly the “Evaluation of APSU Teachers by Area Principals,” the “Follow-up Survey of Graduates in the First Five Years of Teaching,” “Clinical Teaching Evaluation Summary,” and the ETS results (Praxis II: Content Knowledge and Productive Language Skills) indicate numerous strengths of the licensure programs in Foreign Languages as well as of the Teacher Education program in general. The data indicates students seeking licensure in Foreign Languages demonstrate strengths in subject matter proficiency and pedagogical content knowledge, both of which are borne out through the high pass rate of French and Spanish students for the “Praxis II: Test of Content Knowledge.”

As well as indicating strengths of the program, the data also indicates that there are concerns to be addressed. Results of the “Evaluation of Area Principals” underscore the need to strengthen classroom management techniques and instructional strategies, and to reinforce those techniques and strategies in the methods course. The concerns about classroom management were also echoed in the “Follow-up Survey of Graduates in the First Five Years of Teaching.” In addition, the “Follow-up Survey” results consistently showed an additional area of concern: graduates’ ability to interpret aggregated and disaggregated assessment data and to use this information to evaluate student learning and for making data driven decisions. These areas of concern will be addressed in the methods class (LING 4400) during the Spring semester of 2009.