

Creating a Culture for the Preparation of an ACTFL/NCATE Program Review

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Abstract: *This article examines what one university has done to prepare for its program review for recognition by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), a Specialized Professional Association (SPA) of NCATE. The history of the standards movement within higher education is neither long nor exhaustive; however, with the publication of the ACTFL/NCATE Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers (2002), universities must begin to focus efforts on the training of future K–12 foreign language teachers. Six considerations are offered to foreign language and pedagogy faculty: (1) engaging all faculty in the program review process, (2) establishing a culture of oral proficiency, (3) educating faculty on standards, (4) revising curricula, (5) preparing the seven assessments required by ACTFL/NCATE, and (6) making use of technology for data collection.*

Key words: ACTFL/NCATE Program Review, assessments, foreign language education, standards

Language: *Relevant to all languages*

History of the Standards Movement in Language Learning and Teaching

With the publication of *Standards for Foreign Language Learning: Preparing for the 21st Century* (National Standards, 1996) as a collaborative effort of ACTFL, the American Association of Teachers of French (AATF), the American Association of Teachers of German (AATG), the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP), and other national language organizations, the foreign language teaching profession was challenged to adopt a new philosophy in

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which all K–12 students would develop and maintain proficiency in English and at least one other language. The profession presented foreign language teachers with the 5Cs: communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities in the K–12 learning environment. At first the impact of these standards on faculty in institutions of higher education was negligible, as McAlpine states:

Those of us who teach or are in charge of the educational process in language departments at the college and university level have paid little or no attention to the release and subsequent implementation activities that have ensued since the publication of [the standards]. (2000, p. 75)

Between 1996 and 1999, the dissemination of the standards at national, regional, and local foreign language conferences and meetings increased the awareness of language professionals of the need to focus on student outcomes in the foreign language classroom. In 1999, the collaborative, having added the Association of Teachers of Italian (ATI), the American Classical League (ACL), the American Council of Teachers of Russian (ACR), the Chinese Language Teachers' Association of Secondary-Elementary Schools/Chinese Language Teachers' Association (CLTA), and the National Council of Japanese Language Teachers/Association of Teachers of Japanese (ATJ), reissued the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* (National Standards, 1999); standards for Arabic, written by the American Association of Teachers of Arabic (AATA), became available in 2006. More importantly, the addition of grades 13 to 16 in the document invited college and university faculty to become part of this national movement. Even with a national commitment to the standards, college and university faculty seemed to ignore their existence. Beyer writes: "Unless they have children in elementary, middle, or high school, many college professors may have missed the

educational reform movement of the nineties based on 'standards'" (2000, p. 59).

In the fall 1999 and winter 2000 volumes of the *ADFL Bulletin*, 18 articles appeared on the relevance of the student standards in higher education with the goal of fostering a conversation between secondary and postsecondary foreign language professionals. These articles underscore the importance of the student standards in the postsecondary foreign language classroom.

While much national attention has been given to what students should know and are able to do in a foreign language classroom, very little attention has been placed on what their teachers should know and be able to do as foreign language educators. As early as 1988, ACTFL had developed provisional guidelines for the training of K–12 foreign language teachers, although they had little direct influence or mandate over teacher education programs. Glisan notes that the

Provisional Program Guidelines for Foreign Language Teacher Education were ideas for curriculum components to be included in the program and the specific knowledge and skills to be developed by coursework and experiences. In addition to representing the first forward-looking view concerning what knowledge, skills, and experiences would hold promise for language teachers, this effort provided the impetus for discussing teacher preparation among all sectors of the foreign language teaching profession. (2006, p. 12)

Not until 1998 did ACTFL become a member organization of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). NCATE serves as an accreditation organization of approximately 623 teacher education programs either required or by choice in all 50 states and the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico (NCATE, 2006). By 2002, ACTFL had formed a foreign language teacher standards writing team to draft the program

standards for the preparation of K–12 foreign language teachers. The profession at large reviewed and discussed several drafts at national, regional, and state conferences, and this feedback shaped the final version, which was approved by NCATE in October 2002. ACTFL became one of the newest Specialized Professional Associations (SPA) to have program standards, which meant that those institutions that were NCATE-accredited would be required to submit a program report.¹

An Overview of the Teacher Program Standards

In order to assure that a foreign language teacher candidate attains the appropriate knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions, a foreign language teacher education program must demonstrate the following components and characteristics:

- The development of candidates' foreign language proficiency in all areas of communication, with special emphasis on developing oral proficiency, in all language courses. Upper-level courses should be taught in the foreign language.
- An ongoing assessment of candidates' oral proficiency and provision of diagnostic feedback to candidates concerning their progress in meeting required levels of proficiency.
- Language, linguistics, culture, and literature components.
- A methods course that deals specifically with the teaching of foreign languages, and that is taught by a qualified faculty member whose expertise is foreign language education and who is knowledgeable about current instructional approaches and issues.
- Field experiences prior to student teaching that include experiences in foreign-language classrooms.
- Field experiences, including student teaching, that are supervised by a qualified foreign language educator who is knowledgeable about current instructional approaches and issues in the field of foreign language education.
- Opportunities for candidates to experience technology-enhanced instruction and to use technology in their own teaching.
- Opportunities for candidates to participate in a structured study abroad program and/or intensive immersion experience in a target language community. (*ACTFL/NCATE Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers*, 2002, p. 19)

These eight components should be found within the context narrative of the program review. Additionally, there are six content standards in the *ACTFL/NCATE Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers* (2002):

- Standard 1: Language, Linguistics, Comparisons
- Standard 2: Cultures, Literatures, Cross-Disciplinary Concepts
- Standard 3: Language Acquisition Theories and Instructional Practices
- Standard 4: Integration of Standards into Curriculum and Instruction
- Standard 5: Assessment of Languages and Cultures
- Standard 6: Professionalism

With the eight program components and the six content standards, the preparation of foreign language teachers becomes the joint responsibility of the faculties in both the foreign language department and the education college.

Standards 1 and 2 are the domain of the foreign language department. This suggests that the emphasis on the development of language and literary skills, both receptive and productive, falls within the purview of the foreign language faculty. There is a definite reflection of the students' *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* (National Standards, 1996, 2006) in that there is an expectation that teacher candidates can meet interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational modes of communication in the foreign language as measured by the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Guidelines (ACTFL

Proficiency Guidelines—Speaking, 1999). An official Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) is required and programs should expect a minimum oral proficiency level of Advanced Low for their foreign language teacher candidates. ACTFL provides three ways to meet this requirement: (1) an official ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview, (2) an official ACTFL Advanced Level Check (AL), or (3) an official ACTFL OPI through Academic Institutional Upgrade.

Additionally, teacher candidates must understand and demonstrate through instruction the comparisons of language systems, as well as theoretical and sociolinguistic knowledge. Furthermore, candidates must demonstrate understanding of the three cultural Ps—products, practices, and perspectives. Literature faculty continue to play an important role in the preparation of candidates' broad understanding of literary traditions of the language. Finally, candidates also must see their language development as a tool for interpreting other disciplines and acquiring new information that can be obtained only through the knowledge of another language. It is clear that the ACTFL/NCATE program standards are an intentional reflection of the student standards, and thus add more support for the argument that the student standards are applicable to the college and university setting (McAlpine, 2000).

The remaining four standards focus on the pedagogical development of teacher candidates. Standard 3 requires teacher candidates to know how and when language is acquired for a variety of age groups they may teach and to develop strategies to deliver instruction that reflects the needs of these diverse learners. Standard 4 explicitly asks the teacher candidates to incorporate the 5 Cs from the student standards into all aspects of their planning, instruction, and materials creation.

Standard 5 expects teacher candidates to know a variety of assessment models, and to reflect on assessment and know how to report assessment results to a variety of stakeholders. Standard 6 encourages

teacher candidates to become lifelong professionals by continuing to develop language and pedagogical skills beyond initial licensure and to become advocates for the field of foreign language learning.

Whether the foreign language education specialist is housed within the foreign language department or the College of Education, both units are now responsible for the training of a foreign language teacher and no longer can work in isolation. These two faculties must provide models of best practices for students preparing to be foreign language professionals. This change requires faculty, both new and veteran, to analyze their own teaching methods and assessment techniques and to engage in cross-college discussions about foreign language preparation. While an understanding of the teacher preparation standards is crucial, operationalizing the process within a department is most critical. There are at least six major considerations that a foreign language department should anticipate as it prepares for its program review: (1) engaging *all* faculty in the process, (2) establishing a culture of oral proficiency, (3) educating faculty on standards, (4) revising curricula, (5) preparing the seven assessments for the ACTFL/NCATE program review, and (6) archiving student artifacts using technology.

How One Foreign Language Unit Is Preparing for ACTFL/NCATE Program Review

The Department of International and Second Language Studies at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock has chosen to focus considerable effort and dollars on the training of future foreign language teachers, basing this decision on the state and national shortage of foreign language teachers as well as a mandate of full NCATE accreditation required by the Arkansas Department of Education. These requirements place foreign language teacher education on par with the traditional BA in a foreign language. The following section describes considerations postsecondary institutions may

find helpful as they move through the process of meeting ACTFL/NCATE standards. These considerations, from the authors' experiences at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, are essential to the success of the process.

Consideration #1: Engaging All Faculty in the Process

The process of "NCATEing" (a term coined by the authors and used here to refer to the process of acculturating an academic department on the requirements of the ACTFL/NCATE Program Review) a foreign language program should begin as soon as possible in advance of the deadline for preparing a program report since this endeavor may require a considerable amount of time and effort. The foreign language education specialist, whether housed within the foreign language department or within the College of Education, must first locate the responsible faculty or administrator charged with leading the institutional review process. This must be done as early as possible in order to find out the date of the review, considering that the documents for program review are submitted approximately a year in advance of the on-campus NCATE Board of Examiners visit. In this foreign language department, two faculty members are engaged in foreign/second language education, and admittedly, any cross-college connection is not easily accomplished. For more than 10 years, second language education faculty members have had to insist on being at the table for all discussions about teacher training and have had to establish credibility within their own college as well as within the College of Education that they are knowledgeable of this new teacher preparation process. The credibility is established not only on their foreign language expertise but also on general knowledge of teacher training, and on interest, involvement, and general knowledge of the entire NCATE process. This has provided a good link between foreign language faculty and the College of Education.

Once the connections are established with the College of Education, it is crucial that discussions begin immediately within the foreign language department among the literature and culture faculty and the faculty responsible for language skill development. The program review is the responsibility of all faculty and reflects a balance among the content areas of language, literature, and culture as well as pedagogical training. While there may be some resistance at first, educating all members of the faculty on the importance of their role in the education of the teacher candidates is crucial to a successful review. The ACTFL/NCATE teacher preparation standards value literature, culture, and language proficiency equally and should confirm the importance of all three in a foreign language department. Clearly, the ACTFL/NCATE teacher preparation standards do appear overwhelming the first time they are presented to faculty, as was the case in this foreign language department. To alleviate this stress on many faculty members, the foreign language pedagogy faculty guided the department through processes that yielded concrete outcomes:

- Pedagogy faculty showed examples of how they coded their courses to align with ACTFL/NCATE standards and discussed how they required their students to post evidence from their courses on the institution's electronic portfolio.
- All faculty within the department received a copy of the *K-16 Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* and a copy of the *ACTFL/NCATE Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers*.
- Faculty voted to require all foreign language education majors to take an official ACTFL OPI and achieve Advanced Low proficiency. Included in this discussion was the decision that in order to prepare students to be rated at the Advanced Low level, modified oral proficiency interviews given by faculty would be sequentially introduced beginning with the first language course.

- Language-specific groups met and discussed curricular changes that would lead students to higher performance on required assessments for the program review; specifically, the paradigm of products, practices, and perspectives of the 5Cs cultures standard has become the organizing principle of all culture courses. Additionally, Spanish and French faculty have developed three new three-credit courses at the junior level around the communication standard of interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational modes of communication.
- All foreign language faculty met and designed the key assessments that provide evidence for language, linguistics, comparisons and cultures, literatures, and cross-disciplinary concepts.

For more detailed departmental activities leading to departmental unity on this process, see Appendix A.

While some faculty were doubtful of moving students to the Advanced Low level, as veteran and new faculty began to become more familiar with the ACTFL/NCATE Program Review process and the ACTFL OPI, there was less resistance to this new reality. The issue of how this involvement with the ACTFL/NCATE process will play out in faculty roles and rewards policies has yet to be tested, but it is hoped that the work of this faculty will provide evidence of engagement in teaching, research, and service.

Consideration #2: Establishing a Culture of Oral Proficiency

With the requirement that foreign language teacher preparation programs demonstrate that candidates attain Advanced Low speaking proficiency in the target language, educating all faculty on the ACTFL OPI and the *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines—Speaking* (1999) is imperative. All departments preparing foreign language teachers must be exposed to and aware of these proficiency requirements, and ideally will send at least one faculty member to official OPI tester

training to have expertise on staff. Since the early 1990s, this department has either hired faculty with ACTFL OPI tester certification or sought internal funding to send faculty in all languages, including English as a second language, to OPI proficiency tester training demonstrating a commitment to proficiency-based teaching and the development of oral language skills. To date, six faculty members have gone through the four-day training and three were certified. While three did not complete the certification process, the knowledge gained at the training has influenced the content of each foreign language course and the curriculum in general.

As early as 1994, the department implemented an exit test to assess oral proficiency that includes an unofficial OPI for majors. As mentioned previously, the department voted to require all foreign language teacher education candidates to take an official OPI with the expectation that they be rated at the Advanced Low level and report the results to the department. In all four foreign language pedagogy courses, the *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines—Speaking* (1999) and the *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines—Writing* (2001) are distributed and serve as guiding principles for all instruction. Finally, in spring 2006, all first-semester Spanish students were given a modified oral proficiency interview. The purpose of this interview was twofold: (1) to instill in students a culture of proficiency interviewing as a regular part of the program, and (2) to gather longitudinal data on the oral ability of students as they progress through the skills courses in order to make programmatic changes. Because of the difficulty of identifying foreign language education majors at this early stage in their language acquisition, the faculty decided to use the teacher preparation standards as the guiding principle for improving the language ability of all students in foreign language classes. Because the University of Arkansas at Little Rock is a metropolitan university and has a large transfer student population, students often may not consider becoming

ing foreign language teachers until they near graduation, and for this reason the department decided to treat all students as potential foreign language teachers so that meeting the standards was not as onerous a burden for both students and the faculty.

Consideration #3: Educating Faculty on Standards

Even before the 2001 teacher preparation standards were released, this foreign language department had initiated training and workshops on trends within the discipline. Coincidentally, Standard 4 of the *ACTFL/NCATE Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers* asks that foreign language teacher candidates demonstrate the integration of K–12 student standards into their planning, instruction, and assessment. Therefore, the foreign language education faculty decided that university faculty also needed to understand the content of the 5 Cs. As previously mentioned, very few foreign language faculty members have knowledge of the student standards. Although the original 1996 version of the student standards was not intended for postsecondary students, the department decided to investigate how the standards might affect future students who would be attending the university. The department invited June Phillips, who served as national director of the National Standards Project and edited the language-specific document for the National Standards in Foreign Language Education Collaborative Project, to lead a workshop on writing standards-based learning scenarios for university faculty and foreign language teachers from the 10 schools that served as the most common feeder schools for students coming to the university. Both groups of educators left the day-long workshop with a working knowledge of the student standards.

Several grants were awarded to the department from the Teacher Quality Enhancement (TQE) grant program and most recently from the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) pass through dollars of the

Arkansas Department of Higher Education, including “Second Language Standards for a New Millennium” and “Developing Professionals Through Second Language Pedagogy.” Important to this process was the inclusion of both pedagogy faculty and language, culture, and literature faculty as instructors of the grant workshops, further familiarizing them with the importance of the student standards movement.

Another workshop funded by a TQE grant, “Bridging the Gap in the Second Language Classroom,” aimed to help more teachers in the state pass the required Praxis II exam for foreign language content. Literature, culture, language, and pedagogy faculty members led sessions to provide content instruction, skill development, and pedagogical knowledge. The Praxis II scores now must be reported as a part of the ACTFL/NCATE Program Review. This involvement in the grant has enhanced their understanding of the teacher licensing process.

The latest project funded by NCLB dollars distributed through the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, entitled “Standardizing Content: Weaving NCATE Standards into Foreign Language and Language Pedagogy Programs,” brought local teachers and university faculty together around the six standards for the preparation of foreign language teachers. Secondary teachers helped the university foreign language faculty focus on artifact/evidence collection that might be a part of a candidate’s portfolio upon completion of the teacher education program. A major benefit of these grants has been that faculty within the department have started conversations and curricular revisions centered on both the K–16 student standards and the ACTFL/NCATE standards. The impacts of this educational process on the standards can be seen in the curricular changes described below.

Consideration #4: Revising Curricula

The department’s four foreign language pedagogy courses—Methods of Teaching Second

Languages, Second Language Acquisition, Teaching People of Other Cultures, and Second Language Assessment—currently reflect Standards 3 through 6 of the *ACTFL/NCATE Program Standards*. All course assessments are coded to correspond to the ACTFL/NCATE teacher standards, making teacher candidates aware of expectations for licensure, as well as providing a method of ensuring that Standards 3 through 6 are addressed.

As previously mentioned, French and Spanish faculty have realigned the junior-level courses around the interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational modes of the K–16 communications standard (Cheatham, 2006). The interpersonal course emphasizes the skills of speaking and listening, expanding proficiency by practicing real-life role play situations, engaging in conversational exchanges, developing more sophisticated vocabulary, as well as working with written communications (e-mails, letters to individuals, letters to external entities) where there is some possibility of interaction. The interpretive course focuses on reading authentic texts and interpreting listening texts. The emphasis is less textbook-based and relies heavily on Internet resources, written texts, and audio and video sources. The third course, which is presentational, asks the students to use both their interpersonal and interpretive skills to prepare target language oral and written presentations for an audience within the course as well as for external audiences. One example of this was the introduction of a French fairy tale theater, in which students prepared scripts, designed costumes and sets, and presented their fairy tales to the university community. Spanish faculty also have chosen a textbook that incorporates the K–16 student standards for the three-semester foreign language requirement. Moreover, they have begun to discuss products, practices, and perspectives as the paradigm for the organization of the two culture courses that focus on Latin America and Spain. The purpose of these curricular changes is to ensure that candidates experience in their own coursework what they are expected to demonstrate in their classroom

instruction as part of their student teaching experience.

Consideration #5: Preparing the Seven Assessments for the ACTFL/NCATE Program Review

With the faculty educated on the teacher standards, with a culture of oral proficiency established, and with curriculum changes implemented, faculty needed to begin the process of designing the seven required assessments that would form the core of the program review. The seven assessments (with an optional eighth) provide the department the opportunity to demonstrate through evidence, data, and reflection how they are meeting the six program standards mentioned earlier. This department chose to maximize the evidence by providing eight assessments:

1. State licensure assessment or professional examinations of content knowledge
2. Assessment of content knowledge in language to be taught
3. Assessment of candidate ability to plan instruction
4. Assessment of student teaching
5. Assessment of candidate effect on student learning
6. Assessment of candidate oral proficiency
7. Additional assessment that addresses ACTFL/NCATE program standards (required)
8. Additional assessment that addresses ACTFL/NCATE program standards (optional)

For a more detailed explanation, see the preparation guidelines provided by ACTFL, which are accessible at <http://www.actfl.org/files/public/NewGuidelinesPrepRpt4Jan06.pdf> (Glisan et. al, 2005).

As background for designing the seven assessments for the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, the faculty used the following statement as guidance:

The seven required assessments for the ACTFL/NCATE Program Report likewise need to be comprehensive

and multifaceted so that they are capable of judging how teacher education candidates meet the *Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers*. “Comprehensive” means that an assessment must not be narrow; for example, a test on the sound system to meet ACTFL/NCATE Standard 1.b. (Understanding linguistics) might measure phonology but that alone is not robust enough to infer that candidates “understand linguistics” in a meaningful way. Neither is it necessary to have every element of the standard(s) included in the assessment. A comprehensive assessment may take into account sufficient smaller measures, or the assessment itself may cover more areas (e.g., a project in a capstone course where the candidate demonstrates cultural understandings, interpretive and written proficiencies) and align with several standards. (Glisan et. al, 2005)

While the ACTFL/NCATE Program Review is not simply a collection of course assignments for candidates, as explained by Glisan et. al., it should cause the foreign language faculty to think more globally about what performance is expected of all students. With that in mind, the foreign language faculty began to design their key assessments. Assessment 1 requires the program to present data collected from the state licensure test from the most recent three-year period; if the state does not require a licensure test, another content-based assessment must be submitted. In many states, this will be candidate scores on the Praxis II examination or another state-mandated content test. At this institution, Praxis scores are submitted to the department as well as posted by the student in the student’s electronic portfolio. Refer to Consideration #6 for more details on the electronic portfolio.

The most challenging assessments to provide are the content assessments because they require the candidates to demonstrate

linguistic knowledge, language similarities and differences, the three Ps, the role of literature and culture, and connections to other disciplines, all within the confines of two assessments. Because of having only two opportunities to present candidate foreign language content performance, it is recommended that faculty consider providing robust information that combines several of the elements listed above. In order to provide one program review report for all languages, the department decided that a uniform Assessment 2 would be evidence that a teacher candidate can take a given French, German, or Spanish linguistic problem (phonological, morphological, or syntactical) and (1) explain why the problem may exist, (2) identify the features of the problem, (3) identify the key differences between the first language and the second language, and (4) offer suggestions to another second language learner on how to overcome the problem. It was agreed that Assessment 8 provides further evidence by asking students to (1) produce an interpretation or analysis of the text, (2) describe the products/perspectives and/or practices/perspectives of the text or its content, and (3) explain how and why the text may be used in a K–12 classroom setting. Again, it is important to note that both Assessments 2 and 8 give the foreign language department an opportunity to provide input into the development of the candidates; therefore, it is critical that the language faculty be invited to participate in this aspect of the program review process.

Beginning with Assessments 3 through 5, the program review begins to focus on the pedagogical training of candidates. Assessment 3 (Planning) requires that candidates demonstrate their ability to plan appropriate classroom instruction in the target language. This planning should reflect the K–16 student standards and how they drive the planning, instruction, and evaluation of student performance. For example, at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, candidates learn to plan lessons, try them with their peers in their

foreign language methods course, and post the plans to their electronic portfolios. The candidates demonstrate the ability to plan through a Teacher Work Sample that takes place during the student teaching semester. The Teacher Work Sample is a comprehensive document in which the candidate describes the learning environment of the class, chooses the thematic unit, describes the planning process for the unit, implements the instruction, assesses the outcomes of the student learning, reflects on teaching effectiveness, and discusses plans for revising the unit.

The most common way to show effective teaching in Assessment 4 is through the use of the university's student teaching observation form; however, in most cases this form will be generic for all disciplines, so it is important that the preparer of the report specifically discuss the relationship between the ACTFL/NCATE program standards, illustrating how the instrument assesses knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions indicative of the standards. At the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, Assessment 4 (Instruction) follows the pattern of planning from Assessment 3 in that the candidates first learn appropriate instructional techniques based on the student standards in the methods course, teach their peers in the methods course, and post two digital videos of mini-lessons from the methods course to their electronic portfolios. The candidates again show their instructional ability during student teaching through the Teacher Work Sample.

The most misunderstood assessment is Assessment 5 because it is the reporting of the candidate's effect on K-12 student learning and the candidate's ability to assess student learning, and not simply his or her generic ability to create assessments. For Assessment 5 (Assessment of Student Learning), candidates are required to take a separate second language assessment course in which they learn current trends in second language assessment, and design and evaluate assessment instruments and accompanying rubrics. Likewise, in the methods course,

candidates are also asked to post a five-skills sample test to their electronic portfolios. Through the Teacher Work Sample in the student teaching experience, the candidates are required to give a pre- and a posttest and reflect on the results of those tests and their effect on student learning. Candidates should be able to compare the results of the pre- and posttests and confirm that the knowledge and skills that were not evident in the pretest were illustrated in the posttest, thereby confirming that learning occurred as a result of instruction that took place in the unit. Thus, through Assessments 3, 4, and 5, candidates provide evidence of pedagogical skills on how to plan, instruct, and assess during the on-campus experience, with candidates proving their ability in these three key areas during student teaching.

Assessment 6, unique to the ACTFL/NCATE Program Review process, requires the reporting of an official OPI rating administered by Language Testing International, the testing arm of ACTFL, or by the Texas Oral Proficiency Test (TOPT), which is currently the only other oral proficiency assessment that is validated through a centralized testing office. Currently only the OPI and the TOPT procedures include validation of these ratings. It is important that the department institutionalizes this requirement through the curricular process of the university. ACTFL/NCATE expects that the program set the required level of oral proficiency at an Advanced Low rating and that it have a remediation plan for assisting candidates who do not reach that level. Assessment 6 is directly related to the instruction provided through the foreign language curriculum. Foreign language faculty must be made aware of this expectation so that proficiency-based instruction starts with basic language skills courses and continues through upper-level literature and culture courses. As mentioned earlier, the department decided to establish a culture of oral proficiency starting with beginning language courses and continuing throughout the major, as detailed in Consideration #2.

The final required Assessment 7 offers an opportunity for a department to provide further evidence for the program review. Because providing only two assessments demonstrating content knowledge is rather limiting, departments should consider offering an extra sample of a candidate's content knowledge. However, by doing so, there may not be evidence of candidates' growth in professional development, a requirement of Standard 6 of the *ACTFL/NCATE Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers*. At this institution, candidates attend one of the two state foreign language teacher conferences held in the fall and spring of each year. Candidates must scan the program and reflect on the value of the conference to their professional development. Both the program and the reflection are posted to their electronic portfolios. Additionally, within the methods course, candidates submit two philosophy statements (one at the beginning of the course and one at the end) in order to demonstrate professional growth.

Consideration #6: Technology

Keeping track of all the data that are generated from the seven or eight assessments mentioned previously may be overwhelming. Current technology affords an opportunity to organize data for retrieval at the time of the preparation of the program review. Programs should encourage teacher candidates to use electronic portfolio makers so that the burden of collecting artifacts first rests with the teacher candidate and later can be retrieved by the program review writer. Additionally, teacher candidates will have a ready-made performance portfolio that addresses all six teacher preparation standards and provides a complete picture of what the candidates know and are able to do.

Dhonau and McAlpine (2005) offered a rationale for the production of a CD-ROM in the foreign language methods course and discussed the how-tos and caveats related to asking students to produce such a portfolio. Most recently, Web-based portfolios have emerged as the standard for

archiving candidate performance. At the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, the department requires teacher candidates to purchase a license for the use of Chalk and Wire (<http://www.chalkandwire.com>), one of numerous Web-based e-portfolio systems available today. This Web-based portfolio maker allows candidates to organize and create both a public portfolio to share with potential employers and a location for storing artifacts to be assessed by the faculty members. Faculty can upload the six teacher preparation standards, design rubrics that correspond to the standards, and provide online assessment within the Web-based shell. Minimal technical training is required for both students and faculty to effectively use this technology. Another benefit of this particular portfolio program is that it gives students access to their portfolios for a period of eight years and allows them to include digital videos and audio, photos, and other personal items. A student commented upon the use of the electronic portfolio by stating:

After some time working with it (Chalk and Wire), I realized that it was not only easy to use but that this electronic portfolio also offers several advantages. I put all my work and all my assignments on the Web: sample lessons, video and audio files, word documents, pictures, papers, etc. Everything is accessible by just clicking on a link. Moreover, it shows the students' skills using technology and allows a new teacher candidate to present oneself in a very impressive way.

Conclusion

One foreign language department is on its way to addressing the important expectation that the development of foreign language teachers is the responsibility of both the foreign language faculty and pedagogy faculty working together to present the best possible picture of how teacher candidates are prepared. The ACTFL/NCATE program document states:

The intent of the *ACTFL/[NCATE] Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers* is to serve as a catalyst to programs so that they in turn may prepare highly qualified teacher candidates for an educational system that increasingly needs a globally-educated citizenry. (2002, p. 9)

By attempting to meet this challenge, all departments can be enriched beyond the traditional mission of postsecondary foreign language programs. While this may not be easy, the reward will be better-qualified teachers at all levels of instruction.

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank the anonymous reviewers who offered valuable and constructive feedback to help focus the content of this article for the benefit of programs undergoing this important cultural change within foreign language departments.

Note

1. For a more detailed explanation of the *ACTFL/NCATE Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers*, see Eileen W. Glisan's "Today's Pre-Service Foreign Language Teachers: New Expectations, New Realities for Teacher Preparation Programs" in *Responding to a New Vision for Teacher Development*, the 2006 Report of the Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.

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APPENDIX A*Steps Toward Meeting ACTFL/NCATE Standards, 2005–2006*

1. Fall 2005: McAlpine and Dhonau require Chalk and Wire in LANG 4322, 4323, 4324, and 4325 courses and code all of their courses to align with the ACTFL/NCATE and TESOL/NCATE standards
2. October 2005: McAlpine does one-hour presentation on the NCATE process to the entire faculty of the Department of International and Second Language Studies (DISLS)
3. Fall 2005: All faculty receive a copy of the K–16 *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* and a copy of the *ACTFL/NCATE Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers*
4. Fall 2005: 3Ps paradigm introduced into Spanish culture classes
5. January 2006: Develop a checklist to determine ACTFL/NCATE program standards qualifications of students holding a BA and wanting to enter the MED (foreign language emphasis) degree program
6. January 2006: Develop a checklist to determine ACTFL/NCATE program standards qualifications of students seeking post-Baccalaureate licensure in a foreign language
7. Spring 2006: Follow-up written status report to DISLS faculty by McAlpine
8. Spring 2006: Official passing of wording for required Official ACTFL OPI at Advanced Low level passed by DISLS faculty, Undergraduate Council, and entered into University 2006 catalog
9. Spring 2006: DISLS faculty passes curricular change to add 3310 Communications: Presentational, 3311 Communications: Interpersonal, and 3312 Communications: Interpretive in order to expose teacher education candidates to this standards-based paradigm
10. Spring 2006: Spanish faculty engages in Modified Oral Proficiency Interview (MOPI) administration to all 1311 students in order to begin creating a culture of OPI examinations
11. Spring 2006: Successfully fill the Assistant Professor of Spanish linguistics position to begin in Fall 2006
12. Spring 2006: First students register for ACTFL official OPI
13. August 2006: Two-hour DISLS faculty meeting with faculty charged with the eight key assessments, assessments written
14. Fall 2006: McAlpine delivers eight key assessments, rubrics, and template for data tables and faculty reflection to College of Education
15. Fall 2006: In-house MOPI workshop planned and lead by Dhonau
16. Fall 2006: Plan MOPI administration for fall semester 1311, 1312 students
17. Fall 2006: Eight key assessments and accompanying rubrics posted to Chalk and Wire