

February 2020

***REEES Undergraduate Major Assessment Plan***

**Learning Goals and Objectives**

Background

As in interdisciplinary major, REEES students have very differing programs of study, and are not easily lumped together. The core of our major and minor is the attainment of proficiency in Russian (or, in some cases, another Slavic language) and we have been regularly testing students on that proficiency for some time, and they have been consistently achieving the expected level of proficiency for the study of third-year Russian, the required level for the major. However, because our students take a variety of classes in such varied areas as advanced language, literature, history, linguistics, political science, anthropology, and the like, there is no generalized assessment that would be pedagogically sensible or realistic for our varied students. Further, REEES itself as a unit offers courses on Russian language and literature at all levels, but must rely on other departments for a large proportion of its offerings, such as History, Political Science, Religious Studies, Comparative Literature and the like. This system has worked very well, and there are a broad variety of scholars in various departments who teach courses that touch either wholly or at least in significant part on topics pertaining to Russia or Eastern Europe. Also, many of our majors study abroad and are able to take advantage of the expertise of professors and instructors based in Russian-speaking countries.

The rigor of our major consists in the high bar of the completion of third-year Russian and in the required four upper-division courses, two of which must be at the 400 level. The 400 level classes are 400/500 level classes, which means majors are studying together with graduate students, and expectations for reading, research and writing are typically very high, and in many cases means that students are expected to read primary texts in Russian and utilize secondary texts for research that are available only in Russian.

Our stated learning outcomes for our major are:

1. Proficiency in reading, writing, and speaking Russian consistent with completion of at least a third-year level.
2. A broad general understanding of the region of Russia, Eastern Europe, and Eurasia including its history and culture
3. More specialized competency in the field of concentration consistent with the disciplinary expectations of that field.

**Assessment Methods**

As mentioned above, our regular assessment practice for Russian language (learning outcome #1), has been taking place for several years, by administering the Oral Proficiency by Computer through LTI and also by administering our own written exam at the end of third year, which is typical practice in the teaching of Russian.

For the other two outcomes, as mentioned above we rely on performance in our upper-division courses to indicate student competency. Because the papers written for these courses vary in their purpose, there is no one way of unifying a standard of writing for a paper in REEES. In literature, for example, students will be focusing on knowledge of the texts but also on the use of literary techniques and theories in order to write their papers, while history students will be focused on knowledge of historical context, primary texts, but also on the arguments made by various historians. Political science students might well be relying on various forms of data in order to write their papers. However, a committee of both humanities and social science faculty can be convened each year in order to assess the quality of our second and third learning outcomes by gathering a sample of such papers each year.

**Assessment Processes**

Students are already being assessed in language and we will continue to administer proficiency tests each year. In terms of process, we propose as mentioned above to convene a committee of faculty from both humanities and social science to review a sampling of papers written for advanced classes that fulfill the REEES requirement, and to assess whether students are adequately fulfilling the criteria of the given assignment.

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| **Learning Objective** | **AY 19-20** | **AY 20-21** | **AY 21-22** | **AY 22-23** | **AY 23-24** |
| LO1 – language | X | revisit | X | X | X |
| LO2- broad understanding | X | X | revisit | X | X |
| LO3 – competency in field of concentration | X | X | X | revisit | X |

Status, Outcome and Results

After a period of \_\_\_\_\_ months, the committee will report to the general REEES faculty their findings and will discuss them and compare notes. At the end of the year, when results are in from the third-year Russian proficiency tests, those will also be shared with the faculty.

Decisions, Plans and Recommendations

Over the 2020-21 year we plan to appoint the committee,

REEES proposed to assess the following learning outcome for 2018-19:

1. Proficiency in reading, writing, and speaking Russian consistent with completion of at least a third-year level.

To assess this learning outcome, REEES chose to administer the the Oral Proficiency Interview by Computer to third-year language students, which it did in May 2019:

<http://www.languagetesting.com/oral-proficiency-interview-by-computer-opic>

This test, which is administered by LTI, Language Testing International, is a recognized professional international test that assesses according to ACTFL guidlines. Although it tests primarily oral proficiency, it is widely regarded as being of high quality. The cost of the test was $70 per person, which resulted in a certification as to proficiency level being given to each student.

REEES NTTF faculty members Yelaina Kripkov and Heghine Hakobyan also developed a written test of third-year Russian, which they administered in June at the end of the quarter.

Of a class of three, all took both tests, and outcomes were in accordance with expected outcomes. In speaking proficiency, two students were rated at Intermediate Low or Intermediate Mid (at or above expected levels), and one at novice high (very acceptable since they have not yet have the 480 hours the model assumes).

This would indicate that our students, as tested so far, are meeting or exceeding proficiency in speaking Russian.

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For writing, a written test was administered and Heghine Hakobyan and Yelaina Kripkov rated the students as follows:

1 at Novice Low

1 at Novice High

1 at Intermediate High

In this case, one of the three is slightly below expected levels (although again, students are at 450 hours at the end of spring quarter, not 480 as indicated in the chart), while the remaining two are at acceptable levels for the amount of time they have spent.

Below is a table that indicates proficiency levels expected after specific numbers of hours of classroom study and a link to the webpage from which it comes.

The outcome of the proficiency testing has been disseminated to faculty and will be

discussed at our next faculty meeting, but generally we feel that the results indicate that our students are on track with the first learning outcome.

Expected Proficiency Levels for Group III Languages:

<http://www.languagetesting.com/how-long-does-it-take>

