

MODERN LANGUAGES for COMMUNICATION

Elementary Language Instruction at Western Kentucky University

April 2006

INTRODUCTION

This document, *Modern Languages for Communication at WKU*, is a framework for the development of FL (foreign languages) curriculum that will promote articulation with P12 programs in Kentucky. It originated in 2000 from the efforts of the Communicative Competence Task Force established in conjunction with a Title VI grant from the U.S. Department of Education awarded to the Department of Modern Languages at Western Kentucky University (2000-2002).* The document embraces the five “Cs” of the National Standards for FLs: **communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, communities**. The goals, tasks, and topics are grouped below under corresponding National Standards.

The present document evolved from a revision undertaken in 2006 that identifies classroom activities and assessments derived from the goals and proficiencies outlined below that are carried out in the first semesters of the WKU Spanish, French, and German language programs. Eventually, these same goals and proficiencies will be applied to other languages. We intend it as a guide to ourselves as we plan curricula and for the information of others interested in the goals and the content of our elementary level courses.

This document, far from being definitive, purports to be no more than a working document to be modified and perhaps eventually continued into the intermediate and advanced levels of a given language program.

We wish to acknowledge our debt to The University of the State of New York, THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, Albany, New York 12234, whose document online was used extensively in drawing up the original version of this document, as well as the online document *State of Delaware Foreign Languages Curriculum Frame – Content Standards* (http://www.doe.state.de.us/standards/foreign_language/standard_a.html)

Ad hoc Communicative Competence Revision Committee
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* The grant had two major purposes: internationalization of university curriculum and enhancement of FL programs through an emphasis on communicative competence. The Communicative Competence Task Force, in pursuing the second purpose, came to the realization that ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) proficiency guidelines lead naturally to the five Cs of the National Standards and also to content-based FL instruction. Content-based instruction also doubles back, as it were, helping with the first purpose of the grant, internationalization of university curriculum. In particular, content-based instruction will inform business FL courses and pre-professional components of FL intermediate courses, and it will also enhance courses traditionally a part of the FL program, such as civilization and culture courses.

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101 LEVEL (abstract)

Communication

GOALS (functions & situations) Example: Understand & express basic needs; e.g.; food, shelter, travel assistance, guided conversations.	SAMPLE TASKS & TOPICS (assessments) Example: Students read & demonstrate comprehension of public signs.
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Cultures

GOALS (functions & situations) Example: Identify similarities & differences in cultural practices & perspectives: e.g. customs & celebrations, concepts of time, social gestures, etc.	SAMPLE TASKS & TOPICS (assessments) <i>See Learning outcomes</i>
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Connections

GOALS (functions & situations) Example: Identify & use concepts from other subject areas; e.g. language arts, math, science, social studies, visual & performing arts, health, PE (authentic games).	SAMPLE TASKS & TOPICS (assessments) <i>See learning outcomes</i>
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Comparisons

GOALS (functions & situations) Example: Understand and use appropriate non-verbal communication.	SAMPLE TASKS & TOPICS (assessments) Example: Students use various gestures of the target language successfully.
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Communities

GOALS (functions & situations) Example: Establish connections with the target culture through technology, authentic media sources in the community; interact with native speakers through conversations, written texts, or telecommunications.	SAMPLE TASKS & TOPICS (assessments) <i>Bring native speakers to talk about their culture</i>
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102 LEVEL (abstract)

Communication

GOALS (functions & situations) Example: Interact in a variety of situations for personal needs: ask permission, ask for or respond to an offer of help, etc.	SAMPLE TASKS & TOPICS (assessments) Example: On a city map, students listen to directions & draw arrows demonstrating understanding of said directions.
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Cultures

GOALS (functions & situations) Example: Describe the cultural significance of objects, images & symbols from the target culture: visual arts, architecture, music.	SAMPLE TASKS & TOPICS (assessments) Example: Students design a sales catalogue specific for typical social events, describing the outfits pictured & where it would be appropriate to wear them.
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Connections

GOALS (functions & situations) Example: Use multimedia sources to expand understanding of the target culture(s).	SAMPLE TASKS & TOPICS (assessments) Example: Students, using sources intended for same-age speakers of the target language, prepare reports on topics of interest.
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Comparisons

GOALS (functions & situations) Example: Discuss stereotyping in target & native cultures.	SAMPLE TASKS & TOPICS (assessments) Example: Students perform common rules of etiquette associated with food, clothing, courtesy, etc.
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Communities

GOALS (functions & situations) Example: Analyze, discuss & dispel commonly held generalizations about the target culture.	SAMPLE TASKS & TOPICS (assessments) Example: Students choose a recipe from a cookbook in target language & prepare following instructions.
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GOALS OF MODERN LANGUAGE EDUCATION at WKU

COMMUNICATION

The primary goal of second language teaching is the achievement of functional communication in the context of the target language culture.

CULTURE

Achievement of the cultural goals will enable students to develop greater understanding and appreciation of cultures in other countries as well as in their own country and community.

GENERAL EDUCATION

Through coursework, experience abroad, and other cultural encounters, the Modern Languages Program cultivates communicative skills and cultural awareness that prepare students at Western Kentucky University to be more knowledgeable and sensitive citizens of the global community.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

This document defines communication in terms of four components: **functions, situations, topics, and proficiencies**. The integration of these components constitutes learning outcomes.

In the context of a communicative emphasis teachers should be concerned with the skills to be developed and the way students process information according to their learning styles, needs, interests, and abilities. Since students are less concerned about the nature of language than about what they want to do with it, the emphasis in the foreign language classroom should be on the negotiation of meaning rather than on the structure of language.

The four components are defined as follows:

- 1 *Function* - the purpose of communication. In any given communication, an attempt is made to achieve one or more ends, for example, asking for help, giving advice, or seeking information. The functions listed in this syllabus are broad enough to include more specific purposes for communication.
 - 2 *Situation* - the context in which the communication occurs. Situations in this document indicate the communicative partners, their roles, and the channels of communication. Situations must come as close as possible to authentic or culturally correct ones.
 - 3 *Topic* - the subject of the communication. Topics are either universal elements about which communication takes place or they are informed by content-based selections. In the latter case, the topics of communication parallel other course work a student may take or key in on some limited, focused concern such as business, pre-professional curricula, culture, literature, and the like.
 - 4 *Proficiency* - the degree of accuracy and the scope of the communication. The term 'proficiency' does not mean native or near-native command of the language; it refers to the degree of control of the language in listening comprehension, speaking, reading, writing, and culture that the student should be able to demonstrate at each end-of-semester in a FL sequence of courses. We intend to follow the ACTFL guidelines primarily with minor divergences for some content-based guidelines.
- *Culture* is an integral part of communication. The aspirations, beliefs, and understandings that shape patterns of behavior of a linguistic group form the cultural context that makes accurate and meaningful communication possible. This cultural dimension pervades all four of the components of communication.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Defining and Assessing Foreign Language Proficiency at the College Elementary Level

101 LEVEL

COMMUNICATION:

Standard 1.1 : interpersonal communication.

GOALS (functions & situations)	SAMPLE TASKS & TOPICS (assessments)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand & express basic needs; e.g.; food, shelter, travel assistance, guided conversations. 2. Make introductions; understand & express basic courtesies; make simple requests. 3. Exchange information, give & respond to basic directions, instructions & commands. 4. Express likes, dislikes, agreements, disagreements; tell about state of being, feelings, daily routine & events. 	<p>Students hear & respond appropriately to requests & commands, either verbally or physically; e.g. students label objects in the classroom.</p> <p>Students introduce family members.</p>

Standard 1.2: interpretive mode.

GOALS (functions & situations)	SAMPLE TASKS & TOPICS (assessments)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Comprehend informal materials, directions, instructions, brief written information; identify main ideas of familiar texts. 2. Understand authentic cultural materials, conversations on short familiar topics. 3. Identify components of schedules, menus, advertisements; recognize gestures, intonations & other visual or auditory cues; comprehend oral & written descriptions of people & objects. 	<p>Students describe weather by season.</p> <p>Students read & order from an authentic menu.</p>

Standard 1.3: formal presentation of information.

GOALS (functions & situations)	SAMPLE TASKS & TOPICS (assessments)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Give directions, commands & instructions. 2. Present information on simple topics with colors, dates, or autobiographical information. 3. Write a note, letter or invitation. 4. Present familiar topics enhanced by multimedia. 5. Recite proverbs poetry. 	<p>Be able to provide name, address, age, telephone number.</p> <p>Students tell stories based on pictures in sequence; e.g. photo albums.</p>

CULTURES:

Standard 2.1: understanding the relationship between the **practices and perspectives** of studied cultures.

GOALS (functions & situations)	SAMPLE TASKS & TOPICS (assessments)
<p>1. Identify similarities & differences in cultural practices & perspectives: e.g. greeting, leave-taking behaviors, invitations, introductions, courtesy behaviors, polite requests, customs & celebrations, concepts of time, social gestures, etc.</p> <p>2. Identify elements of the target culture that are in transition; e.g. role of the mother, father and child.</p>	<p>Students practice greeting/leave-taking (e.g. hand-shaking, embracing, kissing, & other cultural gestures) in formal and informal situations.</p> <p>Students role-play introducing themselves & respond to the introduction of others.</p> <p>Students visit a restaurant related to the target culture.</p> <p>Students plan a social event, demonstrating recognition of similarities & differences observed by the two cultures.</p>

Standard 2.2: understanding the relationship between the **perspectives and products/contributions** of studied cultures.

GOALS (functions & situations)	SAMPLE TASKS & TOPICS (assessments)
<p>1. Identify tangible products & symbols of the target cultures: e.g. dress, types of dwellings, foods, flags, monuments & landmarks.</p> <p>2. Identify & perform authentic forms of expression in target cultures (dance, art, music, etc.); demonstrate awareness of non-verbal communication.</p> <p>3. Identify & produce types of artwork, crafts or graphic representations of the target culture.</p> <p>4. Raise awareness and knowledge of geographical features, landmarks, historical events.</p>	<p>Students do presentations regarding those subjects and present them to the class</p>

CONNECTIONS:

Standard 3.1: reinforcing **knowledge of other disciplines** through the foreign language.

GOALS (functions & situations)	SAMPLE TASKS & TOPICS (assessments)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Try to incorporate concepts from other area, such as science or performing arts, to help students make an easier relationship between target language and their major 2. Raise awareness of students knowledge concerning the language culture 3. Identify global issues vocabulary in the target culture. 4. Use clocks, calendars & other means to locate events in time. 	<p>Showing them the landmarks and monuments, evoke important dates in history</p> <p>Students draw or move hands on a clock when teacher/classmate gives the time; conduct a class birthday poll.</p>

Standard 3.2: acquiring **information** and perspectives through **authentic materials**.

GOALS (functions & situations)	SAMPLE TASKS & TOPICS (assessments)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Extract information from authentic resources for use in a variety of subject areas; write & respond to brief messages; listen to radio programs & news reports. 2. Relate information using authentic resources & multimedia; watch films, videos & television shows; recognize characteristics of indigenous arts & crafts, music, & performing arts. 	<p>Students read/listen to, & summarize in English narratives written for native speakers.</p>

COMPARISONS:

Standard 4.1: understanding the **nature of language** and the concept of culture through comparisons.

GOALS (functions & situations)	SAMPLE TASKS & TOPICS (assessments)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify word borrowings & cognates among languages. 2. Identify differences in language characteristics; e.g. titles of address, telephone etiquette. 3. Identify & compare differences in writing systems; e.g. diacritics, punctuation, capitalization. 4. Identify & compare different alphabets & numbers. 5. Identify differences in pronunciation systems. 6. Identify & use common idiomatic expressions. 	<p>Students make a list of English words that have been borrowed from other languages.</p> <p>Students group words by grammatical characteristics.</p> <p>Students list foreign words used in English.</p>

Standard 4.2: understanding the **concept of culture** through comparison of studied culture and own.

GOALS (functions & situations)	SAMPLE TASKS & TOPICS (assessments)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify different forms of etiquette; compare daily activities. 2. Compare cultural products and practices; e.g. sports, holidays, food; stereotyping. 3. Achieve familiarity with forms of ceremonial expression. 4. Compare social structures. 5. Identify similarities and differences between cultures in mass communication. 6. Understand and use appropriate non-verbal communication. 	<p>Students use various gestures of the target language successfully.</p> <p>Students set and label a table in keeping with cultural norms.</p> <p>Students perform a target culture celebration, ceremony, or ritual.</p>

COMMUNITIES:

Standard 5.1: using the language both **within and beyond** the school setting.

GOALS (functions & situations)	SAMPLE TASKS & TOPICS (assessments)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Share knowledge of target language & culture with others; identify examples of the target language in daily life. 2. Establish connections with the target culture through technology, authentic media sources in the community; interact with native speakers through conversations, written texts, or telecommunications. 	<p>Students communicate via postcards, e-mail, Internet, letters, & exchange information about their school, town & state with a foreign pen pal.</p> <p>Students create a school art exchange through video, letters, Internet, etc.</p>

Standard 5.2: showing skills necessary to **use the language** for **personal enjoyment** and enrichment.

GOALS (functions & situations)	SAMPLE TASKS & TOPICS (assessments)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apply acquired knowledge for personal enrichment; e.g. movies, plays, concerts & art exhibits; access entertainment media in target language. 2. Demonstrate interpersonal skills in the target language; e.g. listening politely, group interaction, etc. 3. Speak in general about personal life & relate content of literary works, films & other culturally authentic material to personal life. 4. Identify one's own strengths and weaknesses in the target language. 5. Use logical decision making in practical situations. 	<p>Students play sports or games from the target culture.</p> <p>Students perform a scene from a story, a movie related to the target culture.</p>

102 LEVEL

COMMUNICATION:

Standard 1.1: interpersonal communication.

GOALS (FUNCTIONS & SITUATIONS)	SAMPLE TASKS & TOPICS (assessments)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Interact in a variety of situations for personal needs: ask permission, ask for or respond to an offer of help, etc. 2. Identify & respond appropriately to non-verbal cues. 3. Converse on a variety of topics: e.g. personal interests; ask questions of others regarding their activities, experiences or events; express preferences. 4. Elaborate on preferences, agreements & disagreements. 	<p>On a city map, students listen to directions & draw arrows demonstrating understanding of said directions.</p> <p>Students perform the appropriate actions, in response to specific commands.</p> <p>Students plan a party with friends, staying within a budget.</p> <p>Students role-play showing a foreign student through school, identifying rooms by course or activities held there.</p>

Standard 1.2: interpretive mode.

GOALS (functions & situations)	SAMPLE TASKS & TOPICS (assessments)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Summarize the main idea of a text and answer questions in the target language. 2. Demonstrate comprehension of authentic materials on topics of interest. 3. Make inferences & draw conclusions. 4. Identify text type of authentic material; read aloud a familiar passage with appropriate intonation & pronunciation; comprehend spoken & written language from the familiar content of other disciplines. 	<p>Students locate phone numbers for a place to stay, somewhere to eat, the local hospital, the local movie theater, & other places.</p> <p>Students select a restaurant by consulting two authentic menus; give two reasons for their choice.</p> <p>After hearing an authentic tape of a weather report, students answer specific questions.</p> <p>In a foreign airport or train station, students hear announcements re. flight departure, times, gate number, etc. & fill in the appropriate information on a form.</p> <p>Using authentic newspaper ads, students select jobs and describe the job qualifications to the class.</p>

Standard 1.3: formal presentation of information.

GOALS (functions & situations)	SAMPLE TASKS & TOPICS (assessments)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain a process based on prior knowledge and/or experience. 2. Present a variety of topics using multimedia formats; prepare brief written reports on cultural topics for class. 3. Produce formal and informal written communication; write & present short messages in response to postcards, personal notes, phone messages. 4. Produce multimedia presentations: short plays & skits; prepare & present audio and video recorded messages; summarize orally or in writing plot & characters in selected pieces of literature. 5. Write a letter using culturally appropriate format & style. 	<p>The students answer questions about their weekend plans in reply to a friend's letter.</p> <p>Students write Valentine messages to friends for the school newspaper.</p> <p>Students write notes telling friends about the school dance (e.g. time, date, theme, etc.).</p>

CULTURES:

Standard 2.1: understanding the relationship between the **practices and perspectives** of the studied cultures.

GOALS (functions & situations)	SAMPLE TASKS & TOPICS (assessments)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe, analyze & compare daily living patterns of the target culture in terms of school, travel, shopping. 2. Compare cultural practices among same-language cultures; show awareness of cultural similarities & differences & detail their significance. 3. Produce language & behaviors appropriate to the target culture; use public places etiquette. 4. Analyze, discuss & dispel commonly held generalizations about the target culture. 5. Identify common cultural practices influenced by social, historic & geographical factors. 	<p>Students, using appropriate polite requests & responses, role-play a customer & a salesperson at a department store</p> <p>Students design a sales catalog. Look up catalogs and or stores via the internet and sell items to the class from a few items selected.</p> <p>Students role-play being guests at a friend's formal dinner party, using appropriate courtesy expressions & behaviors.</p> <p>Students role-play calling the operator to request numbers of various restaurants, hotels, banks.</p> <p>Students plan a menu, including individual dishes, in order to plan for specific mealtimes during the day, based upon what is typical of a certain language/culture at that time of day.</p>

Standard 2.2: understanding the relationship between the **perspectives and products/contributions** of studied cultures.

GOALS (functions & situations)	SAMPLE TASKS & TOPICS (assessments)
1. Describe the cultural significance of objects, images & symbols from the target culture: visual arts, architecture, music. 2. Analyze contributions of the target culture to the world. 3. Identify & describe social, economic & political institutions & perspectives of the culture.	Students list the gifts they are going to buy on an imaginary trip & tell to whom the gifts may be given Students listen to & view performances of native dances & songs. Students identify examples of the presence of the target culture within their daily lives.

CONNECTIONS:

Standard 3.1: reinforcing **knowledge of other disciplines** through the foreign language. (FOR language specific sections of 102 level courses.)

GOALS (functions & situations)	SAMPLE TASKS & TOPICS (assessments)
1. Transfer & apply information & skills common to both the target language & other subject areas; e.g. map skills, graphing; the metric system, the structure of the government, medicine, and agriculture; identify genres & individuals in art, music, drama, literature, etc. 2. Use new information from the target language or culture to enhance study of a topic in other subject areas; design, conduct & analyze surveys, polls, graphs, etc.; investigate various professions & careers; discuss medical & health issues. 3. Improve English language skills & writing proficiency through an understanding of target language. 4. Research & discuss global issues; observe & evaluate differing practices & standards.	Students make & label physical representation of geographical & geological features such as maps, globes; students match important artists, composers & musicians with information about them & their contributions. After hearing/viewing or reading a story or situation, students are able to summarize the plot. Students are able to complete a dialogue/written text with the content based vocabulary.

Standard 3.2: acquiring **information** and perspectives through **authentic materials**.

GOALS (functions & situations)	SAMPLE TASKS & TOPICS (assessments)
1. Integrate information from authentic sources with other content areas. 2. Use multimedia sources to expand understanding of the target culture(s).	Students, using sources intended for same-age speakers of the target language, do reports on topics of interest. Students identify/collect pictures from the target culture. Students write to a pen pal on e-mail. Students visit a restaurant and order food typical of the country studied.

COMPARISONS:

Standard 4.1: understand the **nature of language** and the concept of culture through comparisons.

GOALS (functions & situations)	SAMPLE TASKS & TOPICS (assessments)
1. Compare & apply within limited contexts the structural patterns of the target language. 2. Apply understanding of differences in pronunciation & writing systems of target language. 3. Explore how idiomatic expressions affect communication & reflect culture. 4. Recognize how vocabulary conveys different meanings in various contexts.	Students, after reading authentic material, circle cognates & give the English equivalent Students summarize essays from the target language into English.

Standard 4.2: understanding the **concept of culture** through comparison of studied culture and own.

GOALS (functions & situations)	SAMPLE TASKS & TOPICS (assessments)

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apply knowledge of etiquette to language use. 2. Relate specific activities to a wider perspective; e.g. role of sports in society, importance of celebrations to family life, origins of holidays, etc. 3. Engage discussion on the literature, periodicals, music, visual arts of the target culture. 4. Compare & contrast roles of children, men & women; family structure, educational systems, & practices of the target culture with the U.S. 5. Discuss stereotyping in target & native cultures. 6. Analyze content & impact of mass media. 	<p>Students exhibit culturally appropriate formal & informal modes of behavior.</p> <p>Assuming the identity of a real or fictional character from the culture, students participate in an interview.</p> <p>Students explain cultural beliefs & perspectives of their own & the target culture related to family, school, work & play in English.</p> <p>Students discuss food, clothing, courtesy, etc.</p>
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COMMUNITIES:

Standard 5.1: using the language both **within and beyond** the school setting.

GOALS (functions & situations)	SAMPLE TASKS & TOPICS (assessments)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Respond to target language outside of classroom. 2. Use technology, media resources in the community to research the target culture; discuss topics of interest in written or oral form with advanced or native speakers. 4. Perform community outreach (if possible, in content specific 102 courses) using target language; interact with members of the local community in professions that use the target language. 	<p>Students exhibit their examples of communication & exchanges with others.</p> <p>Students perform in the target language.</p> <p>Students make a brief announcement commemorating a target culture holiday.</p>

Standard 5.2: showing skills necessary to **use the language** for **personal enjoyment** and enrichment.

GOALS (functions & situations)	SAMPLE TASKS & TOPICS (assessments)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Examine qualities that foster the ability to adapt. 2. Discuss various perspectives of universal themes; e.g. love, conflict, friendship, relationships. 3. Analyze cultural diversity & examine customs that aid the appreciation for other cultures. 4. Explore school-to-work opportunities; e.g. speakers, career fairs, Internet & on-site visits. 5. Apply research skills by using the media center, the Internet, etc.; attend a play, museum, or film. 6. Develop technological skills. 	<p>Students create a display or project that displays use of target language words in English.</p> <p>Students find local restaurants that serve food from the target culture.</p> <p>Students attend a play or film written or made in the target language and/or culture.</p>