Student Learning Objectives

French and Francophone Studies program:
- Achieve a high level of proficiency in the French language in the areas of reading, writing and speaking.
- Develop strong analytical skills and the ability to apply them to interdisciplinary contexts.
- Acquire an extensive understanding of French and Francophone intellectual and cultural history, as well as an awareness of the global legacy of French thought.
- Prepare for a wide range of careers where expertise in French is directly relevant or a valuable complement: teaching, translation, communications, research, law, medicine, business and international relations, the hospitality industry, fashion and virtually any field related to the humanities and social sciences. Competence in French is a key asset for graduate studies in a broad array of disciplines.

German and Scandinavian Studies program:
- Fluency in German or a Scandinavian language in the four skills of speaking, reading, writing and listening.
- Knowledge of the culture, society, and history of the German-speaking or Scandinavian regions.
- Proficiency in critical reading, writing, and thinking about the German-speaking or Scandinavian regions.
- Awareness of contemporary social and cultural issues in the German-speaking or Scandinavian regions.

Comparative Literature:
- Be able to do skilled close readings of various media (poetry, short stories, graphic novels, film, new media) in more than one language. Have a basic vocabulary to handle these media.
- Have a reading knowledge of at least one language other than English, and motivation to pursue further study, preferably in a country where that language is spoken.
- Have a general knowledge of the primary problems in literary theory, with a focus on literary theory as directly related to literature. Construct a set of principles upon which to base the student’s own specific theoretical work.
- Be able to employ various comparative methods cognizant of their limitations and strengths; have an awareness of the basic issues addressed in translation theory.
- Understand what the field of Comparative Literature is like and how the student fits into it. Such an understanding will include an awareness of differences among related language and literature disciplines.
- Cultivate a sense of freedom balanced with a sense of boundaries in defining the student’s true intellectual interests or in expanding intellectual interests the student is already pursuing.
- Learn the process of developing an upper-level research paper that has an element of original insight.
- Be capable of engaging the academic community through oral presentation, specifically in a public academic conference.

Asian Languages and Literatures, Chinese:
- Achieve a functional ability to communicate effectively in Chinese in a culturally appropriate manner.
- Understand fundamental concepts in Chinese linguistics.
- Acquire basic knowledge of Chinese characters including their history and development, structures and formation, and their two forms (traditional and simplified).
- Understand authentic reading materials (texts) in both modern and classical Chinese.
- Write well organized and coherent texts with the proper sociolinguistics register and style.
- Gain a sophisticated understanding of China as an important culture and civilization in the contemporary and historical worlds.

Asian Languages and Literatures, Japanese:
- Follow and participate in conversations in contemporary Japanese on everyday (non-specialist) topics at contextually appropriate levels of formality and politeness.
• Read a variety of contemporary materials, e.g. newspapers, popular fiction, information websites.
• Write expressively on a range of everyday topics, in both a more formal style (essays) and informally (emails and blogs).
• Engage the language as an educated user, with a foundational cultural knowledge of Japan’s literature, arts, religion and society, both contemporary and historical.
• Write analytically in English at a specialist level about certain aspects of Japanese literature or culture (depending on the student’s interests and electives) and translate relevant materials from Japanese sources, whether contemporary or historical.
• Use a wide range of both paper and electronic resources to assist in carrying out the above.
• Students are also strongly encouraged to experience life in Japan first-hand, whether through the vibrant UMass-Japan exchange programs or some other means, ideally during their time at UMass or immediately after graduation.
• Graduates should be ready to pass the international standard Japanese Language Proficiency Test at Level 2 and be close to Level 1.

Spanish and Portuguese:
• Development of reading, writing, and speaking skills in Spanish or Portuguese.
• An understanding of the literature, culture, and society of the Spanish and Portuguese-speaking worlds across historical and geographic lines.
• Gain a broader understanding of language beyond grammar rules. The Spanish and Portuguese languages are living entities that are constantly being transformed in varying historical and geographic contexts.
• The development of critical reading, writing and thinking skills.

Italian:
• Oral skills (speaking and listening) sufficient to allow them to participate effectively in both informal and formal conversations relating to practical, social, and professional topics.
• An ability to read Italian at a level that will permit hem to understand a variety of texts, ranging from general newspaper articles to fairly sophisticated essays and literary texts.
• Writing skills in Italian that will enable them communicate their ideas in an effective, well-organized manner, using good, if not perfect, grammar and syntax.
• Skills in English that will allow them to write as a specialist in their primary field of concentration.
• An appreciation for and general knowledge of Italian literature and aspects of Italian culture and life-ways.

Assessment tools
French and Francophone Studies program:
• Direct method: examination of language proficiency in examples of student work

German and Scandinavian Studies program:
• Direct method: examination of student papers
• Indirect method: student survey on learning outcomes

Comparative Literature:
• Direct methods: tracking of reading knowledge in another language; evaluation of public presentation of paper from Junior Year Writing course.

Asian Languages and Literatures, Chinese:
• Direct method: review of student work at year-end meeting
• Indirect methods: exit interviews asking students about accomplishment of goals and objectives; job placement and employer feedback

Asian Languages and Literatures, Japanese:
• Indirect method: in-house developed senior survey
• Indirect method: mapping exercise for faculty

Spanish and Portuguese:
• Indirect method: faculty review of program through their reporting on courses in the curriculum

Italian:
• Direct/indirect method: evaluation of student portfolio for each student (which includes instructor assessments, samples of student work)

Highlighted recent activities
French and Francophone Studies program:
• Numerous measures for raising level of undergraduate French writing proficiency, as well as several measures for general support of French student learning objectives.

Asian Languages and Literatures, Japanese:
• Working group formed to discuss closer integration of 3rd and 4th year language curriculum with 1st and 2nd year curriculum.

Italian:
• Annual meeting for review of graduating seniors’ portfolios for indications of program strengths and weaknesses.