Learning Outcomes for the B.A in German at the University of Rhode Island January 2007

The German Section offers both traditional and interdisciplinary contexts for studying the language, literature and culture of Germany, Austria and Switzerland to enable graduating students to compete in the global economy of the 21st century with proficiency in all four modalities – speaking, listening, reading and writing. As study abroad and overseas professional experiences are key pathways to achieving such communicative and cultural competency in both an academic and professional setting, the German section emphasizes integrated linguistic and cultural instruction with significant task-and content-based components. While specific expectations on the evidence of student learning outcomes will vary from student to student and by co-disciplines, the German section seeks to regularly gather and report concrete evidence on what students can do based on their study, along with supplemental information relating to their performance after graduation.

Student Learning Outcomes:

A) Language Proficiency

1.Speaking

a. Students are able to handle most uncomplicated communicative tasks and social situations.

b. Students can initiate, sustain and close a general conversation.

c. Students show evidence of connected discourse.

d. Students can generally be understood even by persons not accustomed to dealing with speakers at this level.

e. Students are able to deal appropriately with basic socio-linguistic aspects of German, such as the use of the formal vs. informal address.

f. Students are able to support opinions and talk about hypothetical situations.

2. Listening

a. Students can sustain understanding over longer stretches of connected discourse on a number of topics.

b. Students show an ability to understand the gist of complex speech on an unfamiliar topic, such as a television documentary or a lecture on a cultural topic.

3. Reading

a. Students are able to read and demonstrate good comprehension of texts in areas of the students' interest or professional field.

b. Students are able to comprehend the main idea and some detailed aspects of linguistically complex texts on unfamiliar topics.

4. Writing

a. Students can write about a variety of topics in detail, but with limited accuracy.

b. Students are able to meet most practical writing needs, including simple letters, description and narration.

c. Students produce paragraph-length discourse using appropriate sentence connectors.

B. Cultural Competence

1. Students have a basic knowledge of Germany's geography – including economic geography – within the context of its European neighbors.

2. Students are aware of important historic periods, events and personages of German history.

3. Students are able to identify major contributions of the German-speaking countries to the arts and culture as well as science and technology.

4. Students can identify several important individuals who contributed to German culture (high and low), such as writers, painters, composers, filmmakers, etc.

5. Students have a basic understanding of Germany's economic, political and educational systems.

6. Students will have the cross-cultural awareness enabling them to function in professional and social German settings.

7. Students are aware of important aspects of contemporary German society and the political system.

C) Practical and Professional Skills

1. Students will be able to distill, simplify and relay discipline-specific materials in written and spoken form in a clear and effective manner.

2. Students will be able to demonstrate collaborative problem-solving abilities through task-based language activities.

3. Students will be able to give comprehensible and reasonably accurate discipline-specific presentations.

4. Students will have familiarity with professional etiquette and awareness of appropriate registers for professional interactions.