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

Students will demonstrate advanced skills in the four language modalities of speaking, reading, writing and listening. They will demonstrate critical thinking and collaborative problem-solving abilities through advanced task-based language activities.

1. SPEAKING

a. Students will be able to satisfy the requirements of everyday situations and routine school and work requirements.

b. Students can handle with confidence, though not always with facility, complicated tasks and social situations, e. g., elaborating, complaining and apologizing.

c. Students can narrate and describe in past, present and future time, linking sentences smoothly.

d. Students can use communication strategies, e. g., circumlocution, paraphrasing, pauses and fillers, to smooth over vocabulary shortcomings.

e. Students show signs of an emerging ability to support opinions, explain in detail and hypothesize.

f. Students can be understood without difficulty by native interlocutors.

2. LISTENING

a. Students are able to almost fully understand most speech on a familiar topic, e. g, a classroom lecture on an assigned topic; the narration of an event; a video on a familiar subject.

b. Students show an emerging ability to understand the gist of a propositionally and linguistically complex discourse, e. g., a televised political debate, or a classroom lecture on a literary or cultural topic.

3. READING

a. Students are able to read and demonstrate good comprehension of written discourse in areas of the students' special interest (e. g., a literary text, a magazine or newspaper article, a technical document).

b. Students are able to understand parts of texts which are conceptually abstract and linguistically complex and/or texts which treat unfamiliar topics.

c. Students show an emerging awareness of the aesthetic properties of language and of literary styles.

d. Students are able to recognize the role of cultural knowledge in comprehension of the written text.

4. WRITING

a. Students can write about a variety of topics with significant precision and in detail.

b. Students can narrate and describe in past, present and future time.

c. Students are able to state their opinions and provide some support for their points of view in written discourse.

d. Student will demonstrate ability to do basic analysis and research on a literary or cultural topic and present their findings in a research paper.

5. CULTURES AND LITERATURES

a. Students will demonstrate a knowledge of Italian literature and culture (e.g., through analysis of a major literary period, author, historical personage, or events, including contemporary events).

b. Students will be aware of the extent and nature of the Italian civilization and populations.

c. Students will be able to compare and contrast cultural practices as they relate to Italian and American culture and, based on that knowledge, be able to generalize about the importance of understanding cultural differences.

6. CRITICAL THINKING* AND COLLABORATION

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* [critical thinking: ability to clarify or critique texts, generalize without oversimplifying, distinguish fact from opinion, compare and contrast, clarify issues, make interdisciplinary connections, compare perspectives, exercise fair mindedness, think independently.]

Students will demonstrate critical thinking and collaborative problem-solving abilities through advanced task-based language activities.

Sample benchmark tasks may include: student-created skits, videos, websites, curriculum vitae, summaries, research reports, internship reports, student-led classes, or oral presentations.

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