## GLENDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

## COURSE ASSESSMENT REPORT

SEMESTER/YEAR: Spring 2010

DEPARTMENT: Spanish (Foreign Languages)

COURSE TITLE: Spanish 102

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## COURSE-LEVEL SLO(s) ASSESSED THIS SEMESTER:

- 1. SLO #1: to pronounce Spanish correctly.
- 2. SLO #5: to compare and contrast the Spanish language and culture with their own.

## METHODS OF ASSESSMENT:

Four to five random students per class were assessed on their pronunciation using the rubric attached. We assessed speaking and culture. The students spoke aloud while doing a cultural reading and answered aloud questions based on the cultural reading. The students read from Panorama, lesson 11, from *Vistas*. Since SLO #1 is a very broad topic and there are many aspects that are involved in one's ability to pronounce Spanish correctly, we decided to focus on the concept of the *sílaba tónica*, or the ability to place the stress on the correct syllable of a word based on the rules of accents and syllabication. This concept is formally taught in Spanish 101 and recycled in Spanish 102. SLO #5 was assessed using the questions from "¿Qué aprendiste?" ("What did you learn?") after the class did the cultural reading and we discussed the information as a whole class in Spanish.

ANALYSIS OF ASSESSMENT: What do these results tell you about your students' achievements on the targeted SLO(s)?

Using the rubric attached, 19 students were assessed.

15 students scored between 1-3 "few to no problems" with stressing the correct syllable while speaking.

4 students scored between 4-7 "medium amount of problems" with stressing the correct syllable while speaking. All scored a "4", indicating they had fewer errors than if they had scored a 6 or a 7.

Thus, of this small random sampling of Spanish 102 students, 79% were assessed at "few to no problems," and 21% were assessed at the lowest end of "medium amount of problems." None were found to have a "high amount of problems." Thus, our Spanish 102 students seem to achieve SLO #1 at a high rate for nobody was found to have a "high amount of problems" while speaking. All the instructors noted that this high success rate must also be directly linked to receiving an A for the homework and the lab work. Evidently, these exercises, and in particular the lab exercises, give the students the opportunity to practice speaking. In addition, the instructors also indicated that the students who were assessed at "few to no problems" consistently attended class and participated. Students who scored a 4 had a B average on homework and lab work, thus reinforcing this finding. However, one student who scored a 4 also had an A on his homework and lab work, class participation, and attendance. In his case, it seems that it is not a lack of effort or knowledge, but rather the difficulty he has with speaking Spanish due to the fact that his first language was an Asian language. In addition, the instructors noted that the students who scored a 4 often self-corrected, indicating that they do have knowledge of the rules of the sílaba tónica.

Thus, contrary to what one might think, the Hispanic or heritage speaker of Spanish will not consistently score higher than a non-native speaker of Spanish, at least not while assessing one's knowledge and application of the rules of accents and syllabication. In other words, being Hispanic or a heritage speaker of Spanish generally does seem to help with good pronunciation, but it is not true in all cases sampled. It is true that non-native Spanish speakers can achieve high levels of success in our Spanish program at GCC given that the student completes the homework, lab work, participates in class, and consistently attends class.

In terms of SLO #5, this concept is practiced in every Spanish class while speaking (student/teacher interaction and student/student interaction) because the mere fact that Spanish uses a formal and informal "you" is a fundamental cultural difference. In essence, you cannot separate language from culture since you need to have language

skills in order to read and understand the cultural information. Therefore, we decided to use a cultural reading from the book with information about a Spanish-speaking country so that we would have a uniform basis for conducting the assessment. The students, therefore, were all successful in achieving this SLO at the rates listed above and our Spanish 102 students are able to read aloud, understand what they read, and then answer questions based on the cultural information.

PLAN: Indicate if your assessment results reveal a need for course improvement in order to improve student achievement, and what plans your department will make to do so.

It should not be necessary to re-assess the *sílaba tónica* for a while because it seems our students clearly understand the rules of accents and syllabication and can stress the correct syllable while speaking, which is a fundamental goal of correct pronunciation.

As consistent practice of pronunciation is needed in order for the students to achieve these SLOs, all Spanish 102 instructors will continue to include homework, lab work, attendance, and class participation as essential percentages of the final grade. Furthermore, we will ensure that all Spanish instructors stress the Panorama sections of each lesson as they provide rich material for practicing pronunciation while doing a cultural reading. Also, since we read and discuss the material, this is the perfect opportunity to compare and contrast the culture of the countries where Spanish is spoken with one's own culture.

While the concept of *sílaba tónica* does not seem to pose a problem, all instructors seem to agree that we should in the future focus on assessing the pronunciation of certain letters, like the silent "h", the "qu", and diphthongs.

We will assess the same SLO #1 and #5 in Spanish 103 – Intermediate Spanish I (a Fall Semester only offering) in order to complete the spectrum of these SLOs in the Spanish Language Program.

Assessment rubric for Spanish 101-104 SLOAC: Speaking and Culture Focus: Sílaba tónica while doing a cultural reading Spring 2010 Spanish 101: SLO #1: to pronounce Spanish correctly and SLO #5: to compare and contrast the Spanish language and culture with their own. On a scale of 1-10, a random sampling of students are assessed on their ability to place the stress on the correct syllable while speaking in Spanish according to the rules of syllabication and accentuation. {1-3: few to no problems} {4-7: medium amount of problems} {8-10: high amount of problems} 2 3 4 5 7 8 10 9 Random sampling of students assessed. Write down names (names will not be included in the report!) to check with their lab scores or other sources. 1. 2. 3.

4.

5.